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THE

Bleſſings of Polygamy

DISPLAYED,

IN AN

AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS

TO THE

REV. MARTIN MADAN;

Occaſioned by his late Work, entitled

THELYPHTHORA,

OR,

A TREATISE ON FEMALE RUIN.

Give inſtruction to a wiſe man, and he will be yet wiſer, Prov. ix. 9

BY RICHARD HILL, ESQ.

LONDON:

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DEDICATION.

TO

All good WIVES in the Kingdom,

The following Pages

ARE HUMBLY DEDICATED

BY THEIR REAL FRIEND

THE AUTHOR.

THE

Bleſſings of Polygamy, &c.

Jan. 15, 1781.

Rev. and dear Sir,

HOWEVER exalted my ideas of friendſhip may be, (and I hope I do not exceed the language of humility, when I ſay that I truſt what little I know of religion has rather *refined* than *diminiſhed* them) however great and unalterable may be my regard for you, a regard founded on many years experience of the real worth of the perſon on whom it is placed; however highly I may reſpect you as a man of abilities and a ſcholar; above all, however much I may honor and reverence you as a miniſter of that goſpel from which alone we both look for ſalvation; yet,

where truth is concerned, I muſt forego every other conſideration, and ſay with one of old,

Amicus Plato, Amicus Socrates, Magis Amica Veritas.

But why ſhould I ſuppoſe I am acting contrary to friendſhip in thus publicly addreſſing you on the ſubject of your late work? With pleaſure I call to mind the many happy ſeaſons we have had together, when ſpeaking of thoſe delightful themes which will afford matter of joy and praiſe to the redeemed throughout eternity, how often I have been quickened and edified by your Chriſtian converſation; how often comforted and directed by your judicious and ſeaſonable advice; whilſt on the other hand, you yourſelf have not diſdained to hearken to the words, and have not deſpiſed the counſel of a friend, though ſo much below you in every gift both of nature and of grace. Let me not therefore harbor the thought that I can forfeit your eſteem, becauſe I tell you with all that ſincerity and openneſs with which I have always

always been uſed to accoſt you, that I moſt cordially wiſh your book entitled THELYPHTHORA, had never ſeen the light; as I am now moſt fully perſuaded of the ſad truth of what I told you in a private letter, when I earneſtly beſought you to ſuppreſs it, viz. That the doctrine it advances is totally repugnant to ſcripture, and is calculated to do irreparable miſchief in the church of God, and to the world in general. Theſe in few words are my undiſguiſed ſentiments on your "TREATISE ON FEMALE RUIN;" and yet I am *as* fully perſuaded that your own intention in compiling and writing it was perfectly good, and that uprightneſs towards God, and benevolence towards multitudes of your poor miſerable fellow creatures, at once dictated your words and guided your pen.

If any thing I may offer ſhould prove the means of convincing you how exceedingly you have erred from the truth, your wonted friendſhip will cauſe you to thank me; if you ſhould ſtill retain your opinion, the ſame friendſhip will at leaſt cauſe you

to conclude that I mean well. In either caſe therefore, I hope there is nothing wrong in my undertaking; though I confeſs I have been long ſtruggling with myſelf, before I could reſolve thus publicly to take the field of controverſy againſt you: I truſt however, that in this combat, I ſhall make uſe of no other ſword than *that of the Spirit, which is the word of God* [A], and then though (to uſe a familiar phraſe) I ſhould *give you a home thruſt*, yet I doubt not but we ſhall make up the difference without a ſecond on either ſide, and agree together in this, *That faithful are the wounds of a friend* [B].

I am ſenſible it will afford a ſingular pleaſure to many, that we have thus entered the liſts together. But let *ſuch* unhappy perſons enjoy *ſuch* pleaſure. It is of no better ſort than that which the malice of Satan excites, or rather it is that which excites Satan himſelf, when he can cauſe *Judah to vex Ephraim, or Ephraim Judah*. But it is a melancholy conſideration that

[A] Eph. vi. 17. [B] Prov. xxvii. 6.

what

what will afford matter of malicious glee to the children of the wicked one, will prove the cauſe of heart-felt grief to the children of light.

Still truth is truth, and muſt not be given up, though Paul ſhould withſtand Peter, or though Paul and Barnabas ſhould ſeparate through the ſharpneſs of the contention between them.—But I mention this by way of argument and alluſion, not by way of compariſon, at leaſt ſo far as I myſelf am concerned.

I ſhall not attempt to follow you page by page, but at once *lay the ax to the root*, by ſtriking at the foundation of what I look upon to be the leading principle or corner-ſtone on which you build the doctrine of Polygamy, viz. "That if God allowed a plurality of wives to his people under the Old Teſtament, he cannot have forbidden it to Chriſtians under the New." This idea the erroneouſneſs of which I ſhall endeavor to prove in various undeniable inſtances, has led you to offer the greateſt

violence to almoſt every text of ſcripture you have produced from the goſpels and epiſtles. Yet I bear you witneſs, that you have done this, not becauſe you were unwilling to admit the divine teſtimony, but upon ſuppoſition that you were making the ſcripture conſiſtent with itſelf, in order to prove the uniſon and harmony which ſubſiſt between the Old and New Teſtament.

We will readily admit that Chriſt came not to deſtroy the law; not to ſet up any new rule of conduct, any remedial law, or any more pure ſyſtem of morals than that which was before revealed by God in the ten commandments. So far from it, he came to *fulfill the law*, to *magnify* and *make it honorable*, to reſtore it to its original perfection, and to remove the falſe gloſſes which the ſcribes and phariſees had put upon it; to bring back the laws relative to marriage and divorce to their original and primitive inſtitution. Nor do I at all diſſent from you in believing that all thoſe parts of the ceremonial law, and of the Jewiſh polity which are of moral intend-

ment,

ment, are and muſt be of eternal obligation; "unleſs God be pleaſed either to repeal theſe laws, or to give any other in their ſtead, as his infinite wiſdom ſees good." Obſerve, I lay an uncommon emphaſis on theſe words, and therefore I repeat them. "Unleſs God be pleaſed either to repeal theſe laws, or to give any other in their ſtead, as his infinite wiſdom ſees good." Which he certainly has a right to do, and frequently (as we ſhall ſoon make appear) *has* done, without the leaſt impeachment of his own moral character, or without the leaſt change in his own nature; foraſmuch as the one grand deſign which he ever has in view, and in which he is *without variableneſs or ſhadow of turning*, is his own glory, and the good of his church and people.

I would not from hence be underſtood to inſinuate that Polygamy was ever a part of the law of God. On the contrary, there is no command whatever which enjoins it, or even leans towards it, throughout the whole Bible. No, not in any caſe what-

ever. Not even when a man had no iſſue by a firſt wife, or though he were joined to a woman of the *haughty and refractory diſpoſition of a Vaſhti* [C]. Yet to men unmarried God himſelf frequently condeſcends to give directions for the choice of a wife, as he did by an immediate anſwer to the prayer of Abraham's ſervant when he obtained Rebecca for Iſaac. So throughout the whole book of Proverbs, there are various inſtructions for the choice of a wife,

[C] A very amiable and ſenſible lady one of the beſt of wives, and beſt of mothers, made the following remark to me on the note in the firſt vol. of Mr. Madan's Treatiſe, p. 182—"I do not perceive (ſaid ſhe) that queen Vaſhti did any thing unbecoming a good and an obedient wife, in not coming to the feaſt at king Ahaſuerus's command; ſo far from it, that fear of expoſing her huſband ſeems to have been the motive of her refuſal; for it is expreſsly ſaid, that the king's heart was then *merry with wine*, and the very meſſage itſelf ſhewed, that ſhe was ſent for that he and his gueſts *might look on her beauty*; ſo that the modeſty of the queen might well be ſhocked on the occaſion, and ſhe had great reaſon to fear, leſt had ſhe at this time preſented herſelf to this royal but intoxicated aſſembly, the conſequences of her coming would have been much worſe, than of her ſtaying away."

with

with the higheſt commendations of a good one, and the dreadful lot and condition of the poor man who has the plague and torment of a bad one. Yet throughout the whole, God ſpeaks in the ſingular number (*wife*) and never in the plural (*wives*). Nay there is one paſſage, which if we give the words their plain, eaſy ſcope, (and I ſhall not attempt to twiſt or darken them by any interpretation of my own) will nearly amount to a poſitive injunction of Monogamy [D], and conſequently to a direct prohibition of Polygamy. The words are theſe, *Drink waters out of thine own ciſtern; and running waters out of thine own well. Let* not [E] *thy fountains be diſperſed abroad, and rivers*

[D] For the benefit of the plain Engliſh reader I obſerve once for all, that Monogamy means the marrying or having only one wife at a time. Bigamy means having two wives at a time, and Polygamy (which Mr. Madan chiefly defends) having many wives at a time.

[E] Though I muſt confeſs myſelf to be no Hebræan, yet a friend of mine who has a critical knowledge of that language, aſſures me on the authority of the learned Mr. *Kennicot*, that this word (not) ſtands in

rivers of waters in the ſtreets. Let them be only thine own and not ſtrangers with thee: Let thy fountain be bleſſed, and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind, and pleaſant roe; let her breaſts ſatisfy thee AT ALL TIMES, *and be thou raviſhed always with her love* [F].

But it is not my deſign in this place to produce texts of ſcripture againſt the doctrine of Polygamy. All I would inſiſt upon is, that there never was any poſitive command of God which enjoined it, and that therefore it never was any part of the divine law. That he *permitted* it, either for the reaſons that he permitted bills of divorcement to be given, or to prevent the

in ſome manuſcripts; and indeed there is no making good ſenſe of the paſſage without it; but on the contrary, it appears to be a contradiction of what goes before and what follows after, and the omiſſion of it is exactly of the ſame kind, as you tell us the printer was guilty of, whom archbiſhop Laud fined ſo heavily in the ſtar-chamber for leaving the ſame word [not] out of the ſeventh commandment.

[F] Prov. v. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

Jews,

Jews, who were a particular and diſtinct people, from intermarrying with idolatrous nations, is not to be controverted; and that he bleſſed the perſons and heard the prayers of his own people who practiſed it, and did not illegitimatize the offspring of thoſe polygamous marriages is alſo paſt diſpute. Still ſufferance is no law, even at the time it is granted; (elſe we make God the author of all ſin, ſince no ſin could have exiſted without his permiſſion) much leſs ought it to be extended and conſtrued as a law to after ages and people under different diſpenſations, and different circumſtances. I will not, however, reſt the iſſue on the diſtinction between a *permiſſion* and a *command*; I will even *ſuppoſe* (though I cannot *allow* what never appears to have been the caſe) that God under the Old Teſtament ordained certain laws in favor of Polygamy. Still he who ordained thoſe laws had an equal right to change or abrogate them as he thought fit and meet: and as his holy and ſovereign will is the only rule of right and wrong, I ſhall now prove by ſeveral undeniable inſtances that what

is

is agreeable to the mind of God at one time, and even matter of duty in his creatures to comply with, may at another time be abſolutely wrong and ſinful.

The *firſt* inſtance I bring ſhall be adduced from that almoſt original command of God. *Be fruitful and multiply* [G]. Now it is moſt certain that this command muſt have been fulfilled by the marriages of neareſt relations at the time it was given, and for ſeveral years afterwards, as alſo immediately after Noah's flood; and this without any ſin whatever in the perſons ſo marrying; but when the world was peopled and the reaſon for ſuch marriages no longer ſubſiſted, then God forbad them both to Jews and Gentiles as unlawful, wicked, and inceſtuous. But if we were to adopt your grand argument in defence of Polygamy on this occaſion, then we muſt ſay, that "God himſelf having inſtituted or permitted an inceſtuous intercourſe among the immediate deſcendants of Adam and Eve and of the generations of Noah,

[G] Gen. i. 28.

under

under that great primæval command *increaſe and multiply*, and having bleſſed the perſons and heard the prayers of thoſe who practiſed it, and having adopted their iſſue as legitimate, therefore inceſtuous marriages can never be ſinful under the goſpel, and he who preſumes to ſay that a brother may not now lawfully marry his own ſiſter, attempts to be wiſer than Jehovah himſelf, adopts the principles of Mahomet, Cerinthus, and Socinus, and in fact ſets God and his Son Jeſus Chriſt at variance with each other." How nearly this is your own language upon much more ſlender proof of what you have advanced, let thoſe who have read your book judge.

The *ſecond* inſtance I mention in proof of what I have ſaid, ſhall be taken from the alteration of the ſabbath. *For the ſeventh day God reſted from all the work which he had made, and he bleſſed and ſanctified it* [H].

[H] Gen. ii. 2.

In

In conformity with this early inſtitution of the ſabbath as a day of reſt, the ancient people of God the Jews, obſerved and hallowed the ſeventh day with the moſt rigid ſeverity, and you yourſelf bring ſome terrible examples of God's jealouſy over this law of the ſabbath, as contained in the fourth commandment, and of his indignation againſt the breakers of it; particularly in the fearful caſe of the man who was ordered to be ſtoned to death for gathering a few ſticks on the ſabbath day [I].—But he *who is the Lord of Sabbath*, has thought fit to change his own inſtitution; and the day on which he roſe from the dead, viz. the firſt day of the week, is now the great Chriſtian ſabbath, as the ſeventh day was that of the Jews. Whether the Jewiſh ſabbath were or were not typical of the Chriſtian ſabbath, has nothing to do with the preſent queſtion. The ſabbath day is plainly changed. A poor man may now as lawfully gather his ſticks on a Saturday as on any other day, and none but a Jew or a

[I] Numb. xv. 32, 33, &c.

Sabba-

Sabbatarian would deny him the priviledge. Nay even if he were to do it on a Sunday, eſpecially for any neceſſary purpoſe, I cannot ſuppoſe that the rigor of the inſtitution of the ſabbath ſo far ſubſiſts, as that he would thereby incur the wrath of God, any more than by kindling a fire for preparing his neceſſary food on the ſabbath day, which however was poſitively forbidden under the Moſaic diſpenſation.

In the *third* inſtance I bring I ſhall go farther, and ſhew that God under ſome particular circumſtances abſolutely commanded that to be done as an indiſpenſible duty, which under others he has abſolutely forbid as a moſt atrocious crime, and backed both his command and his prohibition by the ſevereſt penalties, and this was in the caſe of marrying a brother's wife after the death of the brother. Whoſoever did this under the Levitical law, committed an act of ſin and of uncleanneſs, and the curſe of barrenneſs was pronounced againſt the woman with whom he was guilty, as it ſtands, *Lev.* xx. 21.

If

If a man ſhall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedneſs, they ſhall be childleſs. But if the elder brother died without iſſue, then it became a duty abſolutely incumbent on the next brother to marry the widow, and to raiſe up ſeed unto his brother, and the diſobedience to this law was puniſhed with death in the caſe of Onan [K].

The *fourth* inſtance I produce is from Ezra's exhortation to the people and to the prieſts to put away their ſtrange wives [L], which no doubt he did by the direction, or at leaſt by the full approbation of God himſelf, for the order was given immediately after he had addreſſed God in the moſt ſolemn manner by confeſſion, humiliation, and prayer. Yet from the very firſt inſtitution of marriage, thoſe whom God had joined together, no man could put aſunder. And when any man and a virgin had become one fleſh (according to your own

[K] Gen. xxxviii. 8, 9, 10.

[L] Ezra. x. 1, 2, &c. throughout.

inter-

interpretation of the text, Deut. xxii. 28, 29.) *He could not put her away* ALL HIS DAYS, ſeeing *he had humbled her.* You will ſay, that this command of Ezra reſpected idolatrous wives and ſuch only, and therefore theſe marriages were void *ab initio.* I will grant your aſſertion, but then you cannot abide by it yourſelf without throwing down the grand pillar which ſupports your doctrine of Polygamy; viz. that when *any man whatever* has become one fleſh with any maid or virgin, this union is an abſolute marriage in the ſight of God: *He cannot put her away all his days, ſeeing he hath humbled her.* I ſay therefore, you muſt either raze one of the principal foundation ſtones on which you build the doctrine of Polygamy; or otherwiſe, you muſt allow the truth of what I am attempting to prove, viz. that under particular caſes and circumſtances, God frequently permits and allows that, which under different caſes and circumſtances he diſallows and forbids, and *vice verſâ*; ſtill having nothing in view but his own glory and the good of his creatures;

ſo that he ever remains unimpeachable in his character of the God which changeth not, the ſame under the law, as under the goſpel; the ſame *yeſterday, to day, and for ever.*

Fifthly, Under the Jewiſh law bills of divorcement for other cauſes than adultery were permitted: by which the wife was diſmiſſed from the houſe; and had liberty to marry another man; in which caſe, ſhe could not return again to her firſt huſband, Deut. xxiv. 1, 2, &c. [M]. But theſe divorces

[M] The words in our tranſlation are juſt as follow, When a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to paſs that ſhe find no favor in his eyes, becauſe he hath found ſome uncleanneſs in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give *it* in her hand, and ſend her out of his houſe.

And when ſhe is departed out of his houſe, ſhe may go and be another man's *wife.*

And *if* the latter huſband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth *it* in her hand, and ſendeth her out of his houſe; or if the latter huſband die, which took her *to be* his wife;

Her

vorces were pronounced abſolutely unlawful by Chriſt himſelf under the goſpel; and whoſoever put away his wife, and married another was deemed an adulterer; as was alſo the man who married her that was put away. This is clear from our Lord's own words to the phariſees when aſking him of this matter. *Moſes becauſe of the hardneſs of your hearts ſuffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not ſo. And I ſay unto you, whoſoever ſhall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and ſhall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoſo marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery* [N].

As I ſhall have occaſion in the ſequel to conſider this important ſcripture more at large, I ſhall only at preſent make ſome animadverſions on a diſtinction which you

Her former huſband which ſent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that ſhe is defiled: for that *is* abomination before the LORD, and thou ſhalt not cauſe the land to ſin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance. ver. 1, 2, 3, 4.

[N] Matt. xix. 8, 9.

endeavor for obvious reaſons to eſtabliſh between the permiſſion of Moſes, and the permiſſion of God himſelf in this matter of divorce. It is true indeed, our Lord ſays, "*Moſes ſuffered you,*" but are we from thence to ſuppoſe, that God connived at what was ſinful, becauſe he either could not or would not thwart the will and pleaſure of Moſes? Is all ſcripture given by inſpiration of God, or is it not? Did holy men of old ſpeak as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt, or did they not? Was Moſes the vicegerent and legiſlator of God, or was he not? In a word, did he act by his own authority [O] or by that of Jehovah himſelf? I muſt certainly conclude that what was permitted or enjoined by the will of Moſes, was permitted and enjoined by the will of God; and that to talk of Moſes ſuffering a thing to be done which God did *not* ſuffer, is to ſet God and his own law-

[O] My friend has *almoſt* ventured to aſſert this, if not quite. His words are theſe "The only inſtance in which Moſes acted by his *own* authority was in the matter of divorce."

giver

giver (or rather the executor of his own law) at abſolute variance.—Our Lord ſays, *Did not Moſes give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?* Are we therefore to conclude, that Moſes gave the whole law by his own authority? We have juſt as much reaſon to do ſo, as to ſuppoſe that he gave one jot or tittle of it by his own authority, whether we diſtinguiſh it by moral, ceremonial, or judicial. But what puts the matter beyond all diſpute, is, that the whole of the divine law, in the very midſt of which ſtands the paſſage in queſtion, is uſhered in with the greateſt ſolemnity, as containing the mind and will of God himſelf, delivered to his ſervant Moſes, who it is ſaid, was *faithful in all things*, for the uſe of the people over whom he was appointed. And the concluſion of it is ſummed up in the following moſt ſtriking words. *This day THE LORD THY GOD HATH COMMANDED THEE to do theſe ſtatutes and judgments: thou ſhalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul.*

It is therefore paſt all doubt, that the law of God, and the law of Moſes, in every iota and punctilio, were one and the ſame; and that Moſes in no caſe whatever ſuffered any thing which the divine will did not authoriſe him to ſuffer: Moſes could no more have permitted the cuſtom of writing a bill of divorcement, than he could have ſuffered the divorced woman, who had been defiled by another man, to return to her firſt huſband, which he by the very ſame authority which enjoined every other part of the law, ſtrictly prohibits in the following words: *And if the latter huſband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and ſendeth her out of his houſe; or if the latter huſband die, which took her to be his wife. Her former huſband which ſent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that ſhe is defiled; for that is abomination before the Lord: and thou ſhalt not cauſe the land to ſin, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance*, Deut. xxiv. 4, 5.

I con-

I conclude all I have to offer on this head, by remarking, that when our Lord ſays, *Moſes becauſe of the hardneſs of your hearts ſuffered you to put away your wives*, it is juſt the ſame as if he had ſaid, "Becauſe of the hardneſs of your hearts this cuſtom was ſuffered by the law of Moſes;" but to ſuppoſe that Moſes permitted it independent of God's authority, is to ſuppoſe that though God by his own infinite wiſdom framed one part of the law himſelf, yet ſome inconveniences occurring relative to the laws of marriage, which he was not at firſt aware of, he left it to Moſes to make the beſt of a bad bargain, and to get the people out of the ſcrape as well as he could.—Beſides, if diſtinctions of this ſort are once ſet up, in order to countenance any favorite opinion, we are not to wonder, if the words of Paul or Peter, or James or John, be thought of leſs conſequence than the words of Chriſt; which would ſoon make way for the introduction of every abominable and peſtilent hereſy; as we know it already has done among many, who talk of the authority of the four goſpels, in a ſtrain

ſtrain as if they were to be regarded with higher veneration than the reſt of the inſpired writings.

Where it ſuits your own purpoſe, you find fault with biſhop Patrick, for ſaying, "Moſes himſelf ſuppoſes as much;" which you obſerve, "looks as if Moſes was ſpeaking by his own wiſdom;" which the biſhop did not at all mean to infer. But where it militates againſt your plan, and the biſhop ſays, that "divorce (under the law) was allowed of God," there you "*take the liberty* to obſerve, that it is beſt to keep to the expreſſion of ſcripture, and that our bleſſed Saviour does not ſay, that *God* allowed divorce, but *Moſes allowed or* permitted it." However in both caſes, the biſhop ſpeaks on the ſuppoſition that what the legiſlator permitted, the Lawgiver had authorized, and that God and his law were in perfect union.

Before I quit this ſubject I ſhall only obſerve, that the divorced wives here, were not *idolatrous* wives, and yet they were ſuffered

ſuffered to be put away, and even to marry another man, living the firſt huſband; which is a full anſwer to your objection concerning the command given by Ezra to the people to put away their *ſtrange* wives. The ſame may be ſaid of that paſſage, *Exod.* xxi. 10. *If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage ſhall he not diminiſh.*—Moſes is here ſpeaking of the very particular caſe of a man who ſhould ſell his daughter to be a maid ſervant with a maſter who *humbled her*, or as it ſtands in the text, who *dealt deceitfully with her.*—And yet though he had been *one fleſh with her*, God gave him liberty to put her away *if ſhe pleaſed him not*, and to marry another.—Whatever this ſcripture may prove *for* you, it certainly proves this *againſt* you, viz. That the law, which declared that where *a man enticed a maid, and lay with her, he might not put her away all his days*, was not in all caſes invariable; yet this is one of the principal texts on which you ground the doctrine of Polygamy, and argue in defence of it from the *invariable* nature of the law of

God.——But your grand miſtake ſeems to lie in confounding the moral, with the judicial law, and in not perceiving that the latter, though blended with many excellent moral inſtitutions, cannot poſſibly ſubſiſt, neither was intended to ſubſiſt in any other nation than that peculiar one for whoſe uſe it was framed. Such were the laws relative to theft, reſtitution, damages, treſpaſſes in caſes of truſt, uſury, witchcraft, oppreſſing of ſtrangers, bribes, puniſhment of ſervants, &c. &c. &c. which are mentioned in the 22d and 23d chapters of Exodus, as well as in the book of Deuteronomy, and particularly the law of retaliation, which has ſo much in it of moral intendment, that a late writer in a pamphlet intitled "A Letter to the New Parliament," ſeems almoſt as anxious for its revival, as my friend Mr. Madan is for the revival of Polygamy, and *endeavors* to prove that our Saviour never meant to aboliſh it. Yet there is no reaſon to doubt from our Lord's own authority, *Matt.* v. 38, 39, that this law is now ſuperſeded for that

more

more benign and evangelical ſyſtem which enjoins us to return good for evil.

Other inſtances might be brought, but let theſe ſuffice: and indeed I think if I had mentioned only one of them, that one would have been ſufficient to eſtabliſh my poſition, that God conſiſtent with his own invariable nature and attributes, may, and does frequently permit, and even ordain that to be done, under ſome caſes and circumſtances, which under others he abſolutely forbids as wrong and ſinful. That therefore, notwithſtanding he may have allowed and did allow Polygamy to have been practiced by his own people under the law, (though he never gave the leaſt ſhadow of a command for it), in order to preſerve them as a peculiar people and diſtinct nation, and to fulfil his royal promiſe, *that they ſhould be as the ſtars of heaven for multitude* [P]; yet theſe ends being

[P] It is a maxim founded on truth and on general experience, that the ſame cuſtoms in one country may have a quite different effect in another, according

ing now anſwered, God under the goſpel, has been pleaſed to reduce the laws of marriage to their original inſtitution, when he brought the firſt woman to the firſt man, and commanded that a man from thenceforth ſhould leave his father and his mother, and ſhould cleave unto his wife, and they twain ſhould be one fleſh; upon which

ing to the different laws, genius, and circumſtances of the people, and according to the different ages of the world in which they live. Upon which account, though Polygamy may have been friendly to population among the Jews, and might without much inconvenience ſubſiſt with their political government, yet it would certainly have a very different effect in the preſent period among profeſſors of Chriſtianity, and even among the modern Jews, as well as be attended with a long chain of evils, of which the Iſraelites of our day ſeem fully ſenſible, by having given up the practice of Polygamy, and by contenting themſelves with one wife. And indeed, when our Lord himſelf firſt made his appearance upon earth, a Polygamiſt was ſcarcely to be found amongſt the Jews; which is a very ſufficient reaſon, why in his public miniſtrations he gave no particular commands to his hearers *to put away all their wives except one*, when perhaps not one of thoſe hearers who received his teſtimony, had any more wives than one to put away.

account

account Polygamy is ſo far from being allowed under the New Teſtament, that it ranks under the general name of adultery, as I ſhall endeavor to evince, by reſtoring ſeveral paſſages of holy writ to their plain eaſy natural ſenſe, which I am heartily concerned to avow, have been dreadfully obſcured and miſinterpreted by the forced conſtruction you have put upon them; but before I do this, I ſhall ſpeak of the very dreadful and ſhocking conſequences which muſt inevitably attend the eſtabliſhment of your plan.

The Jews (as I before obſerved) being a diſtinct people, and ſeparated by the nature of their laws and worſhip from all other nations under heaven, their great Lawgiver in his directions given to Moſes, ſo ſuited their laws and government to their peculiar ſituation, and their ſituation to their laws and government, that theſe laws were enforced without any other difficulty than what the refractory diſpoſition of that people ſometimes occaſioned, though in general they ſubmitted themſelves

ſelves peaceably to the deciſions of Moſes, and were unanimous in ſuffering thoſe penalties and puniſhments to be inflicted on offenders which their laws enjoined; and when they were not ſo, God in a miraculous manner frequently interpoſed to the deſtruction of the diſobedient. As they were under a particular inſtitution by their judicial law in other reſpects, ſo they were in matters relative to marriage, divorce, ſeduction, whoredom, adultery, &c. not that the nature of theſe could at all alter, or that be ſinful or not ſinful in a Jew which was not the ſame in another perſon, but there were certain temporal puniſhments annexed to the breach of theſe laws, which did not ſubſiſt among other nations, and alſo certain miraculous methods of trying and detecting the guilty, which were only known among themſelves.—Such was *the law of jealouſy* [Q] to diſcover the unfaithfulneſs

[Q] *Numb.* v. 14. And if the ſpirit of jealouſy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and ſhe be defiled; or if the ſpirit of jealouſy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and ſhe be not defiled:

15 Then

faithfulneſs of a wife. And ſomewhat a-kin to it, (though not to be called miraculous)

15 Then ſhall the man bring his wife unto the prieſt, and he ſhall bring her offering for her, the tenth *part* of an ephah of barley-meal, he ſhall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincenſe thereon, for it *is* an offering of jealouſy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.

16 And the prieſt ſhall bring her near, and ſet her before the Lord.

17 And the prieſt ſhall take holy water in an earthen veſſel, and of the duſt that is in the floor of the tabernacle the prieſt ſhall take, and put *it* into the water.

18 And the prieſt ſhall ſet the woman before the Lord, and uncover the woman's head, and put the offering of memorial in her hands, which *is* the jealouſy-offering: and the prieſt ſhall have in his hand the bitter water that cauſeth the curſe.

19 And the prieſt ſhall charge her by an oath, and ſay unto the woman, If no man have lien with thee, and if thou haſt not gone aſide to uncleanneſs *with another* inſtead of thy huſband, be thou free from this bitter water that cauſeth the curſe:

20 But if thou haſt gone aſide *to another* inſtead of thy huſband, and if thou be defiled, and ſome man hath lien with thee beſide thine huſband:

21 Then the prieſt ſhall charge the woman with an oath of curſing, and the prieſt ſhall ſay unto the woman,

culous) was *the cloth of virginity*, whereby to make known the reality of a maid [R].

woman, The Lord make thee a curſe and an oath among thy people, when the Lord doth make thy thigh to rot, and thy belly to ſwell;

22 And this water that cauſeth the curſe ſhall go into thy bowels, to make *thy* belly to ſwell, and thy thigh to rot: And the woman ſhall ſay, Amen, Amen.

23 And the prieſt ſhall write theſe curſes in a book, and he ſhall blot *them* out with the bitter water.

24 And he ſhall cauſe the woman to drink the bitter water that cauſeth the curſe; and the water that cauſeth the curſe ſhall enter into her, *and become* bitter.

25 Then the prieſt ſhall take the jealouſy-offering out of the woman's hand, and ſhall wave the offering before the Lord, and offer it upon the altar.

26 And the prieſt ſhall take an handful of the offering, *even* the memorial thereof, and burn *it* upon the altar, and afterward ſhall cauſe the woman to drink the water.

27 And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it ſhall come to paſs *that* if ſhe be defiled, and have done treſpaſs againſt her huſband; that the water that cauſeth the curſe ſhall enter into her *and become* bitter, and her belly ſhall ſwell, and her thigh ſhall

maid [R]. But as theſe laws now no longer ſubſiſt, and evidently ended with the whole external Jewiſh policy, How would it be poſſible to adopt your ſyſtem among Chriſtians in the preſent day, ſo far only as the knowledge of virginity is concerned.—Suppoſe any artful woman who had a mind to marry ſome rich or great man, were to complain to any magiſtrate, or in any court of law, that he had *enticed her* and *humbled her*, and therefore ſhe had a claim upon him to make her his wife; ſuppoſe

ſhall rot: and the woman ſhall be a curſe among her people.

28 And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean; then ſhe ſhall be free, and ſhall conceive ſeed.

29 This *is* the law of jealouſies, when a wife goeth aſide to *another* inſtead of her huſband and is defiled;

30 Or when the ſpirit of jealouſy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and ſhall ſet the woman before the Lord, and the prieſt ſhall execute upon her all this law.

31 Then ſhall the man be guiltleſs from iniquity, and this woman ſhall bear her iniquity.

[R] See this alſo expreſſed at large, Deut. xxii. ver. 13 to 22.

twenty more were to do the ſame; how could the poor man help himſelf upon your plan? He muſt marry them all, and provide for them all, *ſeeing he hath humblea them, he may not put them away all his days.*

Again, let it be ſuppoſed, that any laſcivious man who was tired of his firſt wife, hankered after variety, and wiſhed to take another, or two, or three, or four, (for your doctrine allows of no limitation) he has nothing to do but to walk about a *wife-ſeeking*, make his propoſals wherever luſt and inconſtancy ſhall ſuggeſt, and if the woman conſent, neither he nor ſhe commit any ſin; *ſhe has given herſelf up to the man of her choice*, who has *humbled her*, and therefore they are man and wife in the ſight of God, without any marriage ceremony whatever.—But *he may not put her away all his days*, and he muſt *provide* for her——But ſuppoſe he is poor and cannot provide for her [S]; ſtill *he may not put her*

[S] I am acquainted with a worthy good man, who in the honeſty and integrity of his heart, having been

her away, ſo he and his wives muſt ſtarve together, though moſt women in ſuch a predicament it is to be preſumed, would ſally forth into the ſtreets and ſupply their wants by proſtitution, eſpecially as nothing could be expected at home but quarrels, jealouſies, and brawlings among the reſt of the females, and at beſt, diſſatisfied looks from a nauſeated huſband: So that if our ſtreets abound with proſtitutes and our ſtews with harlots at preſent, were your ſyſtem to be univerſally adopted, London for its filthineſs would ſoon ſurpaſs even Corinth itſelf, where Polygamy was practiſed without reſtraint, and where we have your own authority to aſſert that in the temple of Venus alone there were 1000, if not 2000 common whores.

Even among the Jews themſelves who were curbed by ſuch ſevere laws, what difficulties attended the practice of Poly-

been led away by the ſpecious reaſonings of *Theophthera*, ſeriouſly meditated a deſign of abridging the book *to give away among the poor*.

gamy in the moſt regular and religious families! Witneſs the tyrannical authority of Sarah over Hagar, in the family of Abraham.—The diſputes between Rachel and Leah in the family of Jacob; and the vexatious and taunting behavior of Penninah towards Hannah, in the family of Elkanah.

Is the caſe a whit better among the Mahometans, where Polygamy is eſtabliſhed by law [T], than it was among the Jews. To

[T] Your obſervation that the prohibition of Polygamy hinders the Turks from embracing Chriſtianity, only proves, That the religion of Jeſus Chriſt is far too pure and ſpiritual for the vitiated palate of a Muſſulman; but it is no better argument for the toleration of Polygamy, than it would be for the toleration of drunkenneſs or covetouſneſs, becauſe if theſe ſins could be diſpenſed with, many a miſer or bottle companion might be made converts to Chriſtianity. You alſo bring a quotation from Lord Kaim's Hiſtory of Man, Vol. II. p. 89, where it is aſſerted, "That among the moſt zealous Chriſtians in the kingdom of Congo, Polygamy is in uſe as formerly, when they were pagans; and ſooner than give it up, they would renounce Chriſtianity." But if the fact be true (which I much doubt) I cannot help thinking

To ſooth the jealouſy of the debauched Muſſulman, and to prevent the apparent miſchiefs which would be the effect of a plurality of wives under his own roof, the poor defenceleſs beings are generally locked and barred up in ſeparate apartments, and none permitted to approach them but their antiquated *Duenna*, who being paſt all fears of exciting the paſſion of love in others, is ſuffered to go abroad herſelf.—But if Polygamy were ever to have the ſanction of law in this land (which God forbid) the wives of Chriſtians muſt either be impriſoned like many among the Turks, or elſe they muſt be ſuffered to dwell together under the ſame roof in their huſband's houſe; in either caſe, what evils muſt follow! What tyranny in the huſband is ſeen in the former, in the latter what jealouſies and quarrellings among the wives, inſomuch that all domeſtic peace muſt be bid adieu to. But above all, how is the caſe of the firſt wife to be pitied, eſpecially if

ing that theſe *moſt zealous Chriſtians* never had any Chriſtianity to renounce.

ſhe be of a meek, amiable, and affectionate diſpoſition, when ſhe is eye witneſs to the fact of others being received to her beloved huſband's bed, and finds his love towards her to grow cool in proportion as it becomes warm towards a ſtranger? We often ſee the dire effects of jealouſy on the moſt diſtant ſuſpicion of unfaithfulneſs; but when that ſuſpicion is exchanged for certain knowledge, what may we expect, or rather what may we *not* expect as the conſequence!

But are matters likely to be at all more peaceable among a numerous brood of children by different wives than among the wives themſelves? What diſputes and wranglings about property, what diſſentions among neareſt relations muſt inevitably take place! inſomuch, that one half of the men that are born muſt be brought up lawyers, to ſquabble about the *meum* and *tuum* of the other half; a large addition muſt be made to the courts of judicature in Weſtminſter-hall, and county aſſizes at the *niſi prius* bar muſt laſt great part of the year.

It

It may be ſaid, did not God know and foreſee all this? Certainly he did know and foreſee it, and therefore has moſt wiſely forbidden the practice of Polygamy under the New Teſtament diſpenſation. Among the Jews theſe inconveniencies were not likely, at leaſt not ſo likely to happen, circumſcribed as they were by their own peculiar laws, and in every diſpute about right and inheritance, ſubject to the immediate deciſion of Moſes, or thoſe appointed by him.

Again, Were Polygamy to be eſtabliſhed by law in this kingdom, ſo far from encouraging honorable population, it would neceſſarily put the greateſt check to it; ſince very few women of a modeſt, gentle, and affectionate ſpirit, and ſuch only are fit for wives, would ever dare to embark in wedlock, leſt the huſband ſhould take another wife, or as many more as he pleaſed, and thereby the firſt and only true wife, be deprived of that ſhare in her huſband's love, and that mutual union of heart with him which alone can make her life happy,

and

and without which in proportion as her own love for him was great, her miſery muſt be great alſo. And can that being deſerve the name of a man, much leſs of a huſband, much leſs ſtill of a Chriſtian, who could bear to ſee the amiable wife of his boſom in ſuch a ſituation? Yet you muſt allow that this caſe might be a very common one, if Polygamy were tollerated by law. It is true, ſome bold, boxing Amazonians might be found who would not be afraid to venture themſelves with any man, but then this would be upon the idea that *vi et armis* they ſhould be able to turn all after-comers out of the houſe, and by force, if not by argument, ſpeedily cure the huſband of his love of Polygamy, and at the ſame time adminiſter to him ſome wholeſome diſcipline well enough ſuited to the nature of his crime.

Again, Suppoſe the legiſlature were really to take up the ſubject of your book, and to paſs an act in favor of Polygamy; what would be the language of all the virtuous wives in the kingdom; "I'm ſure, "if

" if my huſband thinks of taking another " wife, I ſhall heartily wiſh I had never " married." " Ah ſays another (who is " unmarried) I think the men will not find " it an eaſy matter to get good wives now " a days; every honeſt woman will be " afraid of having her noſe put out of " joint, by the introduction of a ſecond " lady into the family, therefore for my " part I am determined to live ſingle."— Hence an immediate decreaſe of honorable population [U].

But

[U] I had not put the above to paper more than a few days, before what I had conceived in theory, was confirmed by practice.—I have juſt had a letter from a friend, wherein he tells me that the match between a certain young gentleman, and a certain very amiable young lady, had been intirely broken off on her ſide, on information ſhe had received, that the gentleman who was propoſed to her was an approver of *Thelyphthora*.——Now ſuppoſe this young gentleman were to propoſe to ſeveral others, and were for the ſame reaſon to receive the ſame anſwer from all. What muſt he do? no woman will have him, for fear he ſhould think himſelf at liberty to give his affections and his perſon to another. Hence he becomes

But let us ſuppoſe the act juſt now paſſed. The very next week how would our daily prints abound with paragraphs of treaties of marriage that were on foot being broken off, unleſs the huſband would enter into articles not to marry any more wives whilſt the firſt was living.—Hence again a ſudden check to marriage, and thereby to honorable population.

Honorable population every where ſlackening its pace, ſeduction with all her dreadful train of deceit, abortive potions, and child murder will neceſſarily come in with gigantic ſtrides, eſpecially as it will be put in practice even by married men, with ſo much greater eaſe in proportion as the unhappy female is deluded under the ſpecious notion of marriage. This idea

comes tempted to commit whoredom, ſeduction, adultery, and what not. I do not indeed ſuppoſe that this will be the caſe with the young gentleman in queſtion, of whom I entertain a very high opinion; but human nature is human nature ſtill, and when checked in an honorable way, will ſeek gratification in one that is diſhonorable.

will

will ſo far operate on thoſe women who are in a lower ſtation of life towards their ſuperiors, that an uncorrupted maid ſervant will be a *rara avis* indeed; but the more *like a black ſwan* the more likely to eſcape [X]. Beſides, what coquetting and flirting will be carried on in every aſſembly! what nightly walkings out! what *tendreſſes* and *douceurs* will there be between married men and young unmarried women! And are there not enough of theſe abominations practiſed already, that you, my dear friend muſt endeavor to wipe off the little ſhame which yet attends them; and in a manner authorize them before the world under the ſanction of your reſpectable pen? Who will thank you for this ſervice? Will virtuous wives? Will conſtant huſbands? Will any parents who have the good of their children at heart? None I believe will think themſelves indebted to you, unleſs it be the reverend editor of the Morning Herald for the many pretty, I might rather ſay, *ſmutty* paragraphs, which

[X] *Rara avis in terris nigroque ſimillima cygno.*

the

the legal adoption of your ſyſtem would furniſh him with; or perhaps ſome rich antiquated maids and old widows with large jointures, who will now no longer ſtick on hand, as their fortunes will be very convenient to ſupport the younger wives who have none.

Lewdneſs and ſeduction with their concomitant miſeries are now in ſome degree confined within a certain circle, which is diſtinguiſhed by the too gentle appellation of *the gallant world*; but bleſſed be God, even in this degenerate day, there are very many families to be found where harmony and mutual love prevail; yet your ſcheme (however undeſignedly), actually tends to introduce all the evils of corruption and diſcontent among thoſe, who remain yet uncontaminated by the vicious cuſtoms of this wanton and luxurious age; inſomuch that every habitation where peace at preſent dwells, is liable to be turned into a temple of diſcord, if not into an human ſlaughter houſe, by wives cutting their own, each others, or their huſband's throats, or hanging

ing or drowning themſelves in fits of frantic jealouſy.——Methinks, I am ſitting quietly in my parlour in London, and am ſuddenly rouzed by the prodigious vociferation of two grim females of the right St. Giles's ſtamp, one on each ſide the ſtreet, and each of them holding one hand to her ear, crying, "Here is a full and true "account of two moſt horrid, barbarous, "bloody, and inhuman murders, which "were committed on Friday night laſt, "upon the bodies of Sir John Fickle, Bart. "and his new wife, to whom he had been "married only one week; which ſad deed "was done by his firſt wife, who afterwards ſtabbed herſelf with the ſame knife "with which ſhe murdered her own huſband and his other lady, whilſt they "were aſleep in bed together. Alſo the "true copy of a letter to her own mother, "which her ladyſhip left upon her table "the night before ſhe committed the "murders, giving her own reaſons for "what ſhe was about to do."

We

We may ſuppoſe the letter to run in the following words:

My deareſt mother,

" YOU will ſhudder indeed when " I tell you, that before to-morrow morn- " ing neither I myſelf, my huſband nor " his other wife will have a being in this " world.—But my reſolution is now unal- " terably fixed. You are my witneſs, God " is my witneſs, that I have made Sir " John a loving, faithful, and obedient " wife for the ſpace of ſix years. But his " late marriage with Miſs *Ogleman*, ren- " ders me diſtracted. O jealouſy! who " can live with thee in their boſom?—I " cannot—I am deſperate—Execration on " the man who firſt brought Polygamy " into this nation! Deareſt mother, take " care of my three ſweet children which I " have had by Sir John, to you the poor " innocent babes look up for help. My " hand ſhakes ſo much that I can hardly " ſay, farewell—farewell.

" From your affectionate daughter,

" CONSTANTIA FICKLE."

Friday Night, 12 o'Clock.

I appeal to common ſenſe, I appeal more particularly to thoſe who have the fineſt and moſt delicate ſenſations; I appeal to thoſe who know themſelves, and who are experimentally and religiouſly acquainted with the workings of human nature, whether there be any thing throughout this tragical ſtory, which wears the face of improbability, when Polygamy ſhould be eſtabliſhed by law.

In ſome part of your book indeed, after having enlarged on the bleſſings of Polygamy, your eyes ſeem opened to ſee the awful train of miſchiefs which muſt unavoidably attend its introduction; and you would almoſt confine it to the ſingle inſtance of a man with a woman who has been debauched by him. Where that man is *unmarried* he is certainly in conſcience bound to make the woman his wife; and in every inſtance of this ſort which comes before me as a magiſtrate, I always lay this down as matter of duty before the reputed father of a child: but when the anſwer returned is, "Pleaſe your Worſhip, "I have

" I have reaſon to believe that I am not " the firſt man who has been concerned " with her;" then, what can I ſay? for if that be a truth, and he marries the woman, he is not only linked for life to another man's whore, but according to your own ſyſtem, to another man's wife, and ſo lives and dies in adultery.

But ſuppoſe the man be already a married man, then certainly his crime becomes much more heinous in the ſight of God (though the purport of your book is to make him guilty of no crime at all, provided he perſiſts in what he has done, and takes the woman to live with him), and by the Moſaic law he was to be ſtoned to death as an adulterer: however, you will not allow this to have been the fact, unleſs the woman were alſo a married woman; and in that caſe, you lament that the puniſhment of death is not now inflicted by our laws. That pecuniary fines for damages, are not in this caſe, a puniſhment adequate to the offence, I readily allow; but if the dread of the eternal vengeance of

of God (which was typified by temporal puniſhments under the judicial law) will not deter men from theſe crimes I know not what will.—From the conduct of our Lord with the phariſees, when they brought to him the woman taken in adultery, it appears clear to me, that under the goſpel, he *indirectly* at leaſt, prohibited that either party in ſuch caſe ſhould ſuffer death, either by ſtoning or otherwiſe, as they were to do by the ſeverity of the Jewiſh law; and as that man did by the extreme rigor of the ſame law, who was found gathering ſticks on the ſabbath day.

But I find I am deviating from my ſubject; in the diſcuſſion of which I was remarking, that in ſome parts of your book, you yourſelf ſeem ſo far ſenſible of the miſchiefs which muſt neceſſarily attend your ſcheme, that you only defend it in ſome rare inſtances. Then, why in the name of God did you write *Thelyphthora?* Why cauſe all the diſſentions you have cauſed in the religious world? Why give ſuch cauſe of joy and triumph to thoſe

who treat every thing ſerious with contempt? Why grieve your friends? Why ſtrengthen the hands of your enemies?—In any view let me repeat the queſtion of my private letter to you—*cui bono ſcribere?*

Again, Were your plan to be univerſally adopted, I am perſuaded, that ſo far from diminiſhing the legion of harlots that now ſwarm among us, it would greatly add to their number; and that almoſt every private houſe where the huſband was a Polygamiſt, would be little better than a ſtew or brothel among the wives, who would certainly plead the inconſtancy of the man they had married, in excuſe for their own; for-as-much as he had firſt violated the conjugal tie, and diſobeyed the apoſtle's command, by with-holding thoſe duties which equally and reciprocally bind the parties to each other, and to themſelves alone, in the plaineſt terms which words can expreſs. " To avoid fornica-
" tion, let every man have his own wife,
" and every woman her own huſband. Let
" the huſband render unto the wife due
" benevo-

" benevolence, likewiſe the wife unto the
" huſband. The wife hath not power of
" her own body, but the huſband: and
" likewiſe alſo the huſband hath not power
" of his own body, but the wife [Y].
" Defraud

[Y] I am under the neceſſity of obſerving, that whenever my learned friend finds an argument to be more than a match for him, he attempts to treat it with more than ordinary contempt. This draws off the attention of the reader to the aſſertion of the author, and thereby he is apt to overlook all the force of the reaſoning which is preſented to his view. Among theſe arguments which Mr. Madan thinks ought to be treated with this ſovereign contempt, is that drawn from the words of St. Paul, " That a man ought not to have a plurality of wives, becauſe the apoſtle all along reſtrains the number to ONE ONLY." His words are theſe. " To ſay that this text forbids Po-
" lygamy, becauſe the word wife is in the ſingular
" number is mere trifling, as much ſo, as contend-
" ing that a man is to love but one neighbour, be-
" cauſe it is ſaid, thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as
" thyſelf, not *neighbours*; or that he ſhall keep but
" one ſervant, becauſe it is ſaid, who art thou that
" judgeſt another man's ſervant." But ſuppoſing this argument more juſt than it is, ſtill is not Mr Madan aware that it is one of that ſort which prove too much, as it may with equal juſtice be urged why

" Defraud ye not *one the other*, except it " be *by conſent* for a time, that ye may give " yourſelves to faſting and prayer, and come " together again, that Satan tempt you not " for your incontinency." In all theſe texts there is juſt the ſame liberty given to the wife to be falſe to the huſband's bed, as to the huſband to be falſe to that of his wife. Should he therefore preſume to take to himſelf any other woman (except in ſuch caſes where the law admits of divorce) might not the injured wife moſt juſtly and moſt ſcripturally complain, and ſay, " My huſband to whom I have ſurrendered " my hand, my heart, and my perſon, no " longer treats me agreeable to thoſe ſo- " lemn vows by which at the time of " marriage, he pledged himſelf to me, " and I to him. That benevolence which " the ſcripture enjoins from him to me I " ſeldom partake of; he claims an exclu-

a wife ſhould have more huſbands than one, as well as why a huſband ſhould have more wives than one. But indeed it cannot be urged in either caſe, for there is ſuch a reciprocal appropriation in the text, as binds the man to the woman alone, and the woman to the man alone.

" five

" ſive power over me, but in direct oppo-
" ſition to the apoſtolic declaration, he
" denies that I have the ſame power over
" him, and therefore he defrauds me of the
" rights of the marriage bed, by beſtow-
" ing his affection on other women, whilſt
" I am left to burn with jealouſy, or pine
" with diſappointed love."

I can indeed conceive it poſſible for a woman to have ſo nice a ſenſe of delicacy, that ſhe would not chooſe to make a complaint of this ſort even to her moſt intimate female friend; but then ſhe is the more to be pitied on that account, as there is certainly nothing contained in it, which any woman of the moſt refined ſentiments might not make even to God himſelf. However, though there might be here and there, ſuch a meek, paſſive female to be found, yet I ſhould judge, without cenſuring the ſex, that they are not very numerous, but that multitudes under the above-mentioned treatment, could neither maintain their chaſtity, nor with-hold their rage; ſo that revenge and proſtitu-

tion, ſeem to be the natural twin children of every polygamous intercourſe.

It is but a ſhort while ago, that a poor deſtitute woman applied to me for a letter of recommendation to be admitted a patitient in the Lock Hoſpital, and urged in excuſe for the bad diſeaſe ſhe had contracted, that her huſband had for ſome time paſt cohabited with another woman. It immediately occurred to me that this man was a true polygamiſt, or rather a bigamiſt, without the ſuperſtitious intermeddling of a prieſt. And that my friend, with his dedication to the governors of the Lock, Magdalen, and Miſericordia, ought alſo to have preferred a petition moving that againſt Polygamy ſhould be eſtabliſhed by law, they would enlarge their wards and engage an additional number of ſurgeons.

But it is an affront to the clear language of the apoſtle in the texts cited from the ſeventh chapter of his firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians, to attempt any explanation of them,

them, every word carries with it perſpicuity and conviction, inſomuch that one might think it were as eaſy to eſtabliſh the doctrine of tranſmigration as of Polygamy from any part of the chapter; nay, much more eaſy, for it ſays nothing againſt tranſmigration, but ſays every thing which can be ſaid againſt Polygamy: how then you could imagine that theſe texts or any of them ſpeak only of a prevailing cuſtom among the Corinthians of lending out their wives is to me inconceivable. Surely to uſe your own language, this is to make ſcripture ſpeak any thing or nothing, or every thing, juſt as ſuits our own fancy. But neither will this forced interpretation ſtand, for in order to adopt it, you are obliged to change the word πορνειας which is very properly tranſlated *fornication*, (or fornications) and to render it adultery, ſaying that it includes all ſort of uncleanneſs. But why muſt the word πορνειας which comes directly from πορνη a harlot, be conſtrued adultery rather than fornication? the reaſon is plain, becauſe ſimple fornication could not be committed by the cuſtom of lending

lending out wives, ſo you muſt either give up your ſenſe of the text, or we muſt grant you that πορνειας in this place means adultery, and cannot mean fornication.—But I have ſtill one objection to make againſt your interpretation; which is, that it intirely deſtroys the force of the apoſtle's reaſoning in urging marriage as a remedy againſt the danger of celibacy. Of this you are aware, and therefore you will not allow this to be the drift of his argument. However, let us look back to the beginning of the chapter.

"Now concerning the things whereof ye "wrote unto me; it is good for a man not "to touch a woman. Nevertheleſs to avoid "fornication, (διὰ τὰς πορνειας) on account of "fornications, let every man have his own "wife, and every woman her own huſband." It is moſt clear that St. Paul from the 1ſt to the 10th verſe, is addreſſing himſelf to unmarried people, and to widows, adviſing continency as beſt ſuited to that diſtreſſed ſtate of the church, if they were able to bear it; elſe he exhorts them to marry, and

and in caſe they ſhould, he adds ſome directions for their conduct when married; after which he ſums up the whole of what he had ſaid in the following words: "I ſay, "therefore, [which word *therefore* has certainly a reference to what goes before] I "ſay, therefore, to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide "even as I, but if they cannot contain let "them marry, for it is better to marry "than to burn."

In the tenth verſe and not before, he turns his diſcourſe to the married, and addreſſes them only. "And unto the married "I command, yet not I but the Lord. Let "not the wife depart from her huſband, "&c. &c."

All this is as plain as ſimple language can make it. How then you could poſſibly apply thoſe words, *Let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own huſband*, as a prohibition to thoſe who had neither wives nor huſbands to lend out, is to me moſt aſtoniſhing; but I cannot help ſaying

ſaying it is ſuch a palpable perverſion of ſenſe and ſcripture as I hardly ever before met with. Yet even if this far fetched interpretation were to be allowed, it is as much a command to the wife not to lend out her huſband, as to the huſband not to lend out his wife: therefore take it which way you will it is big with abſurdity.

But let us hear what you have to offer in defence of your opinion. I will tranſcribe your own words. "Thoſe who re-" preſent the apoſtle as addreſſing himſelf " to ſingle perſons, and adviſing them to " marry to avoid fornication, make him " guilty of evident tautology—for the " eighth verſe is expreſsly addreſſed to the " unmarried and widows, &c. &c. vol. I. " p. 233." So it is, as alſo every verſe before it: therefore here is no tautology, for the apoſtle is ſpeaking all along to the unmarried.

Again, you add, "The very terms (of " the ſecond verſe) ſhew it to be addreſſed " to married perſons; for how could the

" apoſtle

" apoſtle ſay to a ſingle man—let him " have εχετω, retain γυναικα ἑαυτῳ, his wife; " or to a ſingle woman—let her have, i. e. " keep to—τον ἰδιον ανδρα, her own huſband? " The immediate connection of this verſe " with the three following, which can be- " long to *married people only*, is another " ſtrong argument for the truth of this " obſervation."——But I cannot allow it to be any argument at all; and I appeal to every one who has the uſe of their eyes and reaſon, whether every one of thoſe verſes which you ſay belong to *married people only*, do not belong to *unmarried people only*. —For firſt the verb εχω will bear no ſuch ſenſe as you have put upon it—" Let her " retain or keep to,"—and yet if it would bear it, you have actually introduced it in favor of Monogamy inſtead of Polygamy; for it ſtands in the original as a direction to the man as well as to the woman, and therefore, if you will tranſlate one part of the verſe, " Let the wife *keep to* her huſ- " band," you are under the neceſſity of tranſlating the other part, " Let the huſ- " band *keep to* his wife," for the Greek word

word (ἐχέτω) is the ſame in both parts, therefore by endeavoring to make it ſpeak what you wiſh in the one place, you have made it ſpeak what you do not wiſh in the other place. How you will get out of this difficulty I know not, unleſs you can follow the example of your old friend Whittington, Lord-mayor of London, with his ſix bells, and perſuade yourſelf and readers that by the *ſound* of this ſame word ἐχέτω you are ſure it means ſomething very different, when addreſſed to a male than it does when addreſſed to a female, which will be literally *ringing changes*.—But as I obſerved above, the expreſſion will not admit of the conſtruction you have put upon it.—*Let her retain or keep to*—but the plain ſignification of the word is *let her have*, or *let him have:* and would any man in the world, who knew what ſenſe or grammar meant, ſay to a married man, Let him have a wife? or to a married woman let her have an huſband? but the verb being in the imperative mood is plainly a command to *have* that which they have not already.

Secondly,

Secondly, If a tender parent were going to marry a ſon or a daughter, would he not give them directions whilſt they were yet ſingle, for their conduct after marriage, ſuch as "Love your wife," "Behave well to your huſband." In like manner St. Paul exhorting the unmarried who have not the gift of continency, to the uſe of the conjugal bed in order to avoid fornication, adds, "let every man have his own wife, let "every woman have her own huſband. Let "the huſband render unto the wife due be-"nevolence, likewiſe the wife unto the huſ-"band. The huſband has not power of his "own body but the wife. The wife has not "power of her own body but the huſband. "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be "by conſent for a time, that ye may give "yourſelves unto faſting and prayer, and "come together again that Satan tempt you "not for your incontinency." Here is ſenſe and reaſoning in the apoſtle's language, if we ſuppoſe him to be addreſſing himſelf to the unmarried; but what ſenſe or reaſoning can be diſcovered, or where is the remedy he propoſes againſt fornication, if we conſider

conſider him as ſpeaking to thoſe who are married already, in a way of exhortation not to lend out or interchange their wives? Give me leave to remind my learned friend who did not uſe to be averſe to a little pleaſantry, that whilſt he is condemning our laws for the power they have committed to the prieſts of confirming marriages, he himſelf is claiming the authority of marrying half the church of Corinth; for I am ſure that all thoſe to whom St. Paul addreſſes himſelf from the firſt to the tenth verſe, were ever eſteemed unmarried perſons, till that ſame good friend of mine coupled them together by his late interpretation of thoſe texts.

I muſt now obſerve, that your labored criticiſm upon the words τον ιδιον ανδρα—*her own proper huſband*, allowing it its full ſcope, has the ſame misfortune attending it as your conſtruction of the word εχειν viz. it makes more againſt Polygamy than in favor of it, by not proving what you would have it prove, and by proving what you would not have it prove: for it implies

plies ſuch a peculiar right and property which the woman has in that one man, as no other woman has or can have, inſomuch that he is emphatically called *her own huſband*, or *her own man*; which is certainly a much greater proof of the unlawfulneſs of his taking any other woman, than if the word had been in the feminine gender, and had been applied to the wife. I am therefore happy on this occaſion to take your own words, and heartily agree with you, "that as all ſcripture is given "by inſpiration of God, and the Holy "Ghoſt ſpeaketh nothing in vain, there "is a weighty reaſon in giving the epithet "ἰδίῳ, to the huſband;" that no man might ever ſuppoſe he had any power over his own body, ſo as to think himſelf at liberty to give the uſe of it to any other woman, but to her alone, who is ſo excluſively ſtiled by the apoſtle HER OWN PROPER HUSBAND.

After all, it cannot be denied that you have ſent your lady *Polygamia* abroad in *a veſture of wrought gold*, but ſtill I cannot think

think ſhe is *like the king's daughter all glorious within*, for remove the ornamented mantle which you have thrown over her, and her deformity appears to view.

The idea of protecting the weaker ſex, and of ſaving multitudes of them from ruin, is what gives a bias in favor of your plan; as you have dreſſed it up, to the humane and ſerious reader. But the miſchievous and horrible conſequences which muſt inevitably attend the practice of it, you intirely keep out of ſight, though it is plain enough that they frequently ſtared you in the face; and this makes you attempt to draw the line between what you call *the wild licentious Polygamy of the Mahometans*, and a *holy and ſober uſe of it*. But in the firſt place, I am aſtoniſhed that a man who is acquainted with the depths and depravity of human nature, which is the ſame in England as in Turkey, ſhould imagine any ſuch line can poſſibly be drawn, if Polygamy were eſtabliſhed by law.—Secondly, the grand argument which you yourſelf bring in defence of Polygamy,

ny, in a manner counteracts and prevents any ſuch *holy ſober* uſe of it: for the caſe in which you principally aim to eſtabliſh it is between a married man and a virgin or maid that is *enticed* by him. Now ſuch a man from the very act he has been guilty of, not merely in lying with the woman, (for this you will not allow to be any ſin at all if he mean to take her to dwell with him), but in *ſeducing* and *inticing* her, can have no ſuch *holy ſober* notions in his head, as you plead for; but as he firſt had an intercourſe with her from a love of variety, ſo now he takes her as a puniſhment to which he is condemned by law, for having baſely gratified his luſt, though perhaps like Amnon with Tamar *his hatred of her is greater than the love wherewith he loved her.*

But whatever might be the reaſon why the all-wiſe God ever permitted polygamous marriages among the Jews, he has now under the goſpel, as will yet more clearly appear, thought proper abſolutely to prohibit them, and therefore to attempt their reſtoration under the notion of *any holy or ſober uſe of them,* is

to ſet up our own judgment againſt the infinite wiſdom of God himſelf.

As to what you would urge from the example of Abraham, it is certain, that no man ſince his time could be in his particular ſituation, for to him was the promiſe made, *that his ſeed ſhould be as the ſtars of heaven for multitude:* And it is very obſervable, that the father of the faithful took unto him Hagar the Egyptian (who was a type of the Jewiſh church), at the particular inſtance of Sarai his wife, when both he and ſhe ſuppoſed that *the Lord had reſtrained her from child-bearing.* A plain proof that he had more an eye to the fulfilment of God's promiſe, than to the gratification of his own luſt; till therefore we find ourſelves exactly in his predicament, we had better let his precedent for Polygamy entirely alone.

Were you to aſk me how all the evils of fornication, uncleanneſs, ſeduction, and adultery might be cured? I would anſwer the queſtion, by inquiring how you would attempt

attempt to cure the depravity of fallen man? which can never be effected by adding the evil of Polygamy to thoſe before mentioned, but by enforcing the divine law; but what law? not the judicial law of Moſes, which you produce, but the holy ſpiritual law of God. Let the miniſters of the goſpel open and apply this law in its extent and purity, to the conſciences of ſinners, to ſhew them their tranſgreſſion and their helpleſſneſs, and then let them freely preach Chriſt as the only remedy, both from the guilt and dominion of ſin. This will be truly anſwering God's own purpoſe both in the temporal or typical puniſhments under the law, which are now aboliſhed, and were then *only a ſhadow of things to come*; as alſo under the goſpel, the rejectors of which *ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and the glory of his power*; whilſt thoſe who truly believe it, and embrace it *in the light and in the love of it*, ſhall *receive the end of their faith, even the ſalvation of their ſouls*. This preaching of the moral law for the diſcovery and conviction of ſin, and preaching

the goſpel of the free grace of God as the only method of ſalvation *from* ſin, will do more in *one year* for the cure of ſeduction, adultery, fornication, and laſciviouſneſs in all its branches than a thouſand treatiſes upon Polygamy, though they ſhould have been *twenty years* in compiling.

STILL once more let us ſuppoſe your ſcheme eſtabliſhed by the legiſlature juſt as you would have it. Very ſoon after, my dear friend to his own great grief, reads the following paragraph in the Morning Poſt.

" Laſt night lady A——, wife of Sir " Thomas A——, Bart. was found hang- " ing in her own dreſſing-room, in —— " Square. The cauſe of this dreadful ca- " taſtrophe is ſuppoſed to be as follows: " About a week ago, Miſs B——, daugh- " ter of William B——, Eſq; went off " from the maſquerade at Carliſle Houſe, " with Sir Thomas A——. Next day, " her mother, Mrs. B——, hearing that " ſhe was at Sir Thomas's houſe, came to " her

" her in the utmoſt diſtreſs, and interro-
" gating her on the cauſe of her conduct,
" ſhe replied with great pertneſs, that nei-
" ther ſhe nor Sir Thomas had done any
" thing they need be aſhamed of, or that
" was not authorized both by the law of
" God and the law of the land. Sir Tho-
" mas A—— was the *man of her choice*;
" ſhe had *ſurrendered up her perſon* to him,
" ſhe was now his wife without any more
" ceremony whatever, with him ſhe meant
" to continue *all her days*; and he might
" take to himſelf twenty more young la-
" dies in the ſame way, if he thought pro-
" per; ſhe had no right to controul him,
" whilſt the divine law, as well as the law
" of the land, which had lately paſſed the
" King, Lords, and Commons, in favor of
" Polygamy, was now in full force."——
" Heavens, child! (cried the affrighted pa-
" rent) do you know that Sir Thomas
" A—— is already a married man, and
" has a virtuous good wife of his own;
" and that what you have done will cer-
" tainly break her heart?—Know it, yes,
" very well, but what is that to me? (re-

" plied Miſs) Ought I to pretend to be
" wiſer than God? or to wiſh to ſee hu-
" man inventions, ſuperſtitious ceremonies,
" and prieſt's marriages adopted, inſtead of
" what he himſelf has appointed? No, no,
" I have now done with all theſe fooleries,
" ſince Sir Thomas A----- has put into my
" hands a very fine book with a very hard
" name, upon theſe ſubjects; and if every
" body was to do as Sir Thomas and I
" have done, ſeduction, fornication, and
" adultery, would ſoon be baniſhed out of
" the kingdom; and to tell you the truth,
" as ſoon as I hear that the book is
" *abridged*, I intend to buy an hundred to
" diſperſe among the poor by way of cha-
" rity." This anſwer of the young lady, had ſuch an effect on the wretched mother, that ſhe was carried home in a chair and expired the ſame evening; ſo that lady A—— and Mrs. B——, have both loſt their lives by this unfortunate marriage.

Now I do not ſay that ſuch a caſe ever will happen; but this I muſt ſay, that all this, and much more of a like ſort might happen

happen if your plan were to paſs into a law, for in the whole of this tranſaction, whatever motives might influence either the ſuppoſed characters of Sir Thomas A—— or Miſs B——, neither the one nor the other have acted in the leaſt tittle contrary to what your own book authorizes: and feigned (God be praiſed) as the caſe is, yet I thought the introduction of it very allowable, by way of contraſting ſome of thoſe melancholy pictures, which you have drawn and hung out to public view on the other ſide. I may add, that it is repaying you in your own coin, for as you have ranſacked old newſpapers to point out the bleſſings of Polygamy *in futuro*, it is very fair that I ſhould have recourſe to what we may naturally ſuppoſe will be the language of thoſe papers, in order to point out the curſes which will attend the monſter when brought forth: and indeed, to ſhew the wiſdom of that law which makes every Polygamiſt ſuffer death as a felon; but for which puniſhment you yourſelf have made the beſt apology, by wiſhing it were ſtill to be put in execution upon the adulterer: therefore you

cannot

cannot blame thoſe who looking upon Polygamy and adultery to be ſynonimous terms, have thought fit to inflict a ſentence on the former, which you judge to be merited by the latter.

Such are a few of the flagrant miſchiefs which muſt inevitably attend the introduction of Polygamy into this land, and yet they are but a few, in compariſon of others which muſt ſtrike the mind of every thinking perſon. For God's ſake therefore, my dear friend, conſider the dreadful licentious tendency of your aſſertions. Should one man defile another man's wife, you ſeem to lament that our laws do not puniſh him with death; but if he intice or debauch a thouſand virgins, and afterwards take them to live with him, and call them by the name of wife, there is no harm done. It is a perfect marriage in the ſight of God. There wants no human ceremony to complete it. The man is guilty of no ſin. The woman, or rather each woman, is perfectly innocent; ſhe has *ſurrendered up her perſon to the man of her choice,* and it would be

be the higheſt impropriety to *upbraid* her with the name of a *whore*.

If ſuch reaſoning be not (though I grant moſt undeſignedly) to give a ſanction to fornication and lewdneſs, I know not what is; and if I have or ſhall prove the abſolute unlawfulneſs of Polygamy in the courſe of this work, you yourſelf muſt be of the ſame opinion; at preſent however, you are not of that mind, having given us a pretty ſtrong proof of your ſentiments on this point, in the caſe of a certain noble earl and the late unfortunate Miſs R—y, whom you poſitively affirm, that the Rev. Mr. H——— ought to have looked upon as the earl's wife: and no doubt his lordſhip is much obliged to you for the healing plaiſter which you have adminiſtered to him: and he may now conſole himſelf with another Miſs R—y, and another yet, if he thinks proper, without ſin on his part, or cauſe of ſhame in that of the females.

Permit me now to ſtate a caſe, and to aſk your opinion on it.

As

As a magiſtrate, it may have frequently happened that a ſingle woman has come before you to filiate her baſtard child on a married man. Now I ſhould be glad to know, what you would ſay to the parties on ſuch an occaſion? From your character as a miniſter of the goſpel, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, that the man and the woman would expect you ſhould not only enforce the ſtatute *concerning baſtards begotten and born out of lawful matrimony*, but that you ſhould alſo add ſome ſeaſonable advice and reproof concerning the ſin they have been guilty of. But how great muſt be their ſurprize, if you were to addreſs the two perſons before you in the following language; and yet if you are true to your own principles, I ſee not what other you can make uſe of.

" My friends, why are you uneaſy? You
" have neither of you done any thing
" wrong in the ſight of God, or that you
" need be aſhamed of; ſo far from it, you
" have fulfilled the divine command, *in-*
" *creaſe and multiply*; and it is a ſcandal
" to our laws, that this poor girl ſhould be
" deemed

" deemed a whore. Beſides, I pronounce
" you to be uſeful members of the com-
" munity, by the encouragement you have
" given to population.

" Go your ways therefore, take the wo-
" man to live with you, and continue to
" act together as you have done. You are
" truly man and wife in the ſight of God,
" without going through the forms of that
" ſuperſtitious ceremony which we call *ma-*
" *trimony*; though we clergy are obliged to
" trudge through the farce of reading, what
" is called, the church ſervice, before the
" parties can be joined in law."

As I hear a third volume of *Thelyphthora* is ſoon to make its appearance, your ſentiments on the caſe in queſtion, will no doubt oblige the public.

You would appear to diſapprove the practice of *keeping miſtreſſes*; but I beg to inquire where is the harm of this according to your ſyſtem, if the man who keeps the woman be the firſt who had intercourſe with her?

her? You ſay, in ſuch caſe, *he may not put her away all his days.* It ſeems then the ſin is in *putting her away*, not in *keeping her*; for he ſins not at all whilſt he cohabits with her; all that time ſhe is *his wife:* yet if he puts her away, I hardly know whether you would denominate her his wife or his miſtreſs, ſeeing it was only a *temporary intercourſe* that he had with her; and indeed upon your plan, it is almoſt impoſſible to ſay, who is a kept miſtreſs and who a wife; for you have adjudged the late unfortunate Miſs *Ray*, to be the wife of the firſt Lord of the A———y; and you ſay that the Rev. Mr. H———n, ought to have been taught to have looked upon her as ſuch.

When that amorous Prince, Charles the Second, lay on his death-bed, before the Jeſuits laid hold on him, he was attended by the pious Biſhop *Kenn*, when the exemplary prelate exhorted him to put away his miſtreſs, the celebrated *Nell Gwynne* [Z], and

[Z] I am not quite certain whether Eleanor Gwynne or the Ducheſs of Portſmouth, was at that time

and to be reconciled to his Queen. Had you, my good friend, been called to the dying Monarch, inſtead of the Biſhop of Bath and Wells, what advice would you have adminiſtered for his ſoul's health on that particular occaſion? The firſt piece of intelligence neceſſary to be obtained, would be whether any other man had been *one fleſh* with the favorite actreſs, previous to his Majeſty; in which caſe he was living in adultery with her, ſeeing ſhe was the true wife in God's ſight, of the firſt man who had been connected with her; but if his Majeſty *only* had been familiar with her, then ſhe was as much married to him by the divine law, as his own Queen was. How ſhall this difficulty be ſolved? Mrs. Gwynne alone can do it; and to her the reverend caſuiſt muſt put the deciding queſtion, and gather all the information he can relative to *the tokens of her virginity* before the King approached her. Mrs. Gwynne aſſures you, that no man whatever had ac-

time the reigning favorite of Charles the Second; but if I miſtake not it was the former; however that be, it makes no difference as to the caſe in hand.

ceſs

ceſs to her perſon before his Majeſty, and that ever ſince ſhe had been faithful to her royal lover. You anſwer (ſtrictly according to the doctrine of *Thelyphthora*), "Then, "Madam, you are his Majeſty's *own* wife, "and he is your *own proper* huſband, ac- "cording to the primitive inſtitution of "marriage, notwithſtanding the ceremony "which has paſſed between him and his "preſent conſort, and notwithſtanding no "ſuch form by a prieſt has ever exiſted "between you and him: therefore, if his "Majeſty ſhould recover from this illneſs, "he would ſhew himſelf a very wicked "man in not living with you as he has "done; and you Mrs. Gwynne, would be "equally ſinful, if you did not continue to "grant his Majeſty every indulgence he "requires at your hands. My advice there- "fore in this matter, for the preſent eaſe "of the King's conſcience, and for his "everlaſting welfare, is this; that if it "pleaſe God to raiſe him up from this bed "whereon he now languiſhes, you both "continue to give yourſelves up to the *holy* "and *ſober* embraces of each other, in which

" which may you *be fruitful and multiply*;
" and may thouſands of others, influenced
" by your virtuous examples, inſtead of
" *pretending to be wiſer than God*; go on
" to follow thoſe bright examples, till for-
" nication, adultery, and every ſpecies of
" lewdneſs be baniſhed from this guilty
" land, which has forſaken the divine au-
" thority, and ſubſtituted human devices
" and ſuperſtitious ceremonies in its
" ſtead."

Is there a ſyllable in all this, which you as his Majeſty's *ſpiritual guide* might not, nay *ought* not, upon your principles to have ſaid upon the occaſion?

YOUR definition of a whore is confined to one " who proſtitutes herſelf to differ-
" ent men as luſt or gain may induce her,
" *without deſign of marrying them.*" But I am quite at a loſs to know what you mean by " *marrying them*;" do you ſuppoſe the woman to be unmarried, till ſome outward ceremony has paſſed? Can the *magic* words of a prieſt make her more a wife or leſs a whore

whore than ſhe was before? if ſo, you throw down at once the whole ſtructure you have been raiſing. If you chooſe to abide by your own aſſertions, you muſt avow that ſhe was married to the firſt man with whom ſhe *became one fleſh*; and therefore ſhe muſt neceſſarily commit adultery with all others ſhe becomes afterwards connected with: ſo that I may venture to affirm, that according to your ideas of marriage, fornication cannot exiſt. I grant however, that the above is a true definition of *a common ſtrumpet*; but whoredom, if ſcripture be our guide, might be committed even under the Moſaic diſpenſation, when any unmarried woman or widow, had intercourſe with only one man, who was not her lawful huſband; as is clear from the caſe of Tamar; for we read *Gen.* xxxviii. 24. *It was told Judah, ſaying, Tamar thy daughter-in-law hath played the harlot; and alſo behold ſhe is with child by whoredom.* But according to your idea and definition of a whore, no man whatever had a right to ſay ſo. Suppoſe ſhe had *ſurrendered up her perſon to the man of her choice*, whether ſhe

ſhe were virgin or widow, or whether he were married or unmarried, ſhe had done nothing that was forbidden, and therefore ought not to be ſtigmatized with the diſgraceful appellation of a whore. It is true indeed, Judah took her for a common harlot, and he went in unto her as ſuch. But this alters not the caſe, for they who *told Judah that ſhe was with child by whoredom*, knew nothing of this intercourſe, nor how it was obtained; and therefore the fact ſtands on record, as full proof that when any woman in Iſrael who had no huſband proved to be with child, ſhe was as much deemed an whore, as we ſhould judge her to be one in England.

I muſt alſo obſerve, that neither Judah nor his friend Hirah, the Adullamite, ſeem to have thought it at all extraordinary, that they found an harlot ſitting by the way ſide; nor did the men of whom *Hirah* inquired concerning her, expreſs any aſtoniſhment at his queſtion, as if ſome new thing had happened in Iſrael; but they ſimply made anſwer, that they did not ſee her; which cir-

cumſtance, beſides the frequent mention we have of harlots and adultereſſes in the Old Teſtament, and the cautions given to avoid commerce with them, as alſo the complaints of the prophets, that the people *aſſembled themſelves by troops in the harlots houſes, and were like fed horſes neighing after their neighbours wives*, carry pretty flagrant proof that adultery and whoredom were much more common in Judea, than you would have us believe, and that conſequently Polygamy was no ſpecific againſt either.

It has been urged, that if Polygamy be forbidden, ſome of the eminent Old Teſtament ſaints lived and died in adultery. It might with as much truth be objected, that if it be now unlawful for neareſt relations to marry, the immediate deſcendants of Adam and of Noah lived and died in inceſt; or if it be now wrong for a man to marry his brother's wife, it muſt have been ſo in all ages of the world, and under all circumſtances, ſince ſin can never alter its nature.

It will readily be granted that ſin cannot alter its nature, and that God cannot alter *his* nature as bearing an everlaſting hatred againſt ſin. But then what is ſin, but the tranſgreſſion of the law of God? And what is the law of God, but the tranſcript and declaration of the will of God? And if God permit that at one time which he prohibits at another, the ſame act will be no ſin when he allows it, which will be ſin when he forbids it.—When Jael wife of Heber the Kenite, ſlew Siſera, the captain of Jabin's hoſt, by driving a nail into his temples whilſt he was aſleep in her tent, ſhe committed no ſin, becauſe ſhe acted under the immediate direction of God; but had Jael done this without that direction, ſhe had been guilty of the baſeſt treachery and murder. Had Joſhua when he conducted the Iſraelites to the promiſed land, acted by his own authority in burning the cities, ſlaying the inhabitants young and old, and even hanging five kings at once, after making his captains put their feet upon the necks of thoſe kings, he would have been one of the moſt impious and arbitrary tyrants that the

ſun ever beheld; but by acting by the expreſs warrant of Jehovah, in driving out and conſuming the idolatrous nations, he had power to command that ſun to ſtand ſtill upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, whilſt he completed his ſlaughter on the combined armies of all the kings of the Amorites, *Joſhua* x. *throughout*.

But after all, ſuppoſe I cannot reconcile this difficulty to my own apprehenſion: ſuppoſe I am fearful of ſaying that Polygamy was no ſin under the Old Teſtament, and am alſo fearful of aſſerting that Abraham, David, and others, lived and died in adultery; ſtill why cannot I content myſelf with what is plainly revealed, and leave it to God to clear up the juſtice and equity of his own dealings with the children of men? Secret things belong unto him. Infinite wiſdom has its own reaſons for whatever it does, and will be accountable to none. Whatever be dark, this is certain, that God thought fit to *permit* Polygamy under the law: but permiſſion does not by any means

means imply approbation; nay, God often permits that which from the very holineſs of his nature is his abhorrence. On the other hand, it is equally certain, that God has thought fit to prohibit Polygamy under the goſpel; and therefore though permiſſion may well enough accord with diſapprobation, yet prohibition and approbation are ſo far from agreeing, that they cannot ſtand together.

Let us now in as few words as poſſible, conſider all the proof you attempt to bring from the Old Teſtament in favour of Polygamy, and the whole amounts to this: That in *no caſe* it was commanded or enjoined; in ſome caſes it was permitted; but whether this permiſſion ever amounted to approbation, remains ſtill to be aſcertained. It is true, you have brought ſome texts of ſcripture in defence of what you have advanced; but in none of theſe you have attempted to prove any thing beyond an allowance of Polygamy, except in one, and that is *Exod.* xxii. 16. *If a man intice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her,*

he ſhall ſurely endow her to be his wife. And even this ſingle text will not bear you out, unleſs you can bring ſome better proof than you have done, that *a man* (which you have unwarrantably ventured to render *any man*) means a married man, at leaſt a married man, as well as a ſingle one; in which interpretation however, you have not only the general voice of commentators againſt you, but if ſcripture be allowed to be its own interpreter, the voice of God himſelf, in that remarkable text which you have beſtowed much pains to get over, *Lev.* xviii. 18. *Thou ſhalt not take a wife to her ſiſter, to vex her, to uncover her nakedneſs, beſide the other in her life time*; which thoſe who have the moſt critical knowledge of the Hebrew, interpret as in the marginal reading, of not taking one wife to another, for which they have certainly very good authority, ſince the word which we tranſlate a *ſiſter*, is rendered *another*, in other parts of ſcripture.

The utmoſt therefore, which you have proved from the Old Teſtament, is a *permiſſion*

miſſion of Polygamy among the Jews, not without much difficulty in getting over ſeveral texts, which at leaſt ſeem very unfavorable to it, particularly that noted paſſage, *Mal.* ii. 14, 15, 16. which I ſhall give at length. *Yet ye ſay, Wherefore? becauſe the Lord hath been witneſs between thee and the wife of thy youth; againſt whom thou haſt dealt treacherouſly: yet ſhe is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the reſidue of the Spirit: and wherefore one? that he might ſeek a godly ſeed. Therefore take heed to your ſpirit, and let none deal treacherouſly againſt the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Iſrael ſaith, that he hateth putting away, &c. &c.* Though it be certainly a humiliating circumſtance for an author to confeſs himſelf ignorant of a language, the knowledge of which is in a degree neceſſary for the carrying on of a controverſy in which he is engaged, yet rather than ſtrut about like Æſop's daw in borrowed plumes, I will freely and ingenuouſly own myſelf incapable of examining into your Hebrew criticiſms on the foregoing text, which I am

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the more ſorry for, as from the awkward or rather round-about explanation you have given of the paſſage, I am led to ſuſpect that you have not faithfully delivered the mind and will of God revealed in it, particularly in thoſe words, *Did not he make one?* i. e. as I always underſtood by comparing it with the context, "Did not he make the huſband and wife one, by uniting them in ſo near a relation, that they two ſhould be conſidered as one fleſh?"—But what is your ſenſe of the words—*Did not one make? Or did not one God make or create both you and your wives?* Vol. I. p. 139. But whether you, or whether all "*the commentators that have followed one another like ſheep,*" be in the right in the explanation of this clauſe, it is certain that if the whole three verſes taken together, do not contain any abſolute command that one man ſhould have only one wife, it ſeems at leaſt taken for granted, ſince there is mention made only of one man and one woman as united together in the nuptial bonds—and ſtiled, *thee and the wife of thy youth*, againſt whom the huſband is cautioned *not to deal treacherouſly.*

Be aſſured, that I am as much againſt pinning my faith on the ſleeves of commentators, as you can be; but yet I cannot help thinking, that there are many among them, who for learning, extenſive knowledge, ſound judgment, integrity and humility, are not at all inferior to thoſe who affect to undervalue them. I am alſo perſuaded, that though the knowledge of the original ſcriptures be very uſeful, yet that no point of real importance either to the faith or practice of a Chriſtian depends upon, or requires a great ſkill in criticiſm. The goſpel is preached to the poor, and the Lord knew, that comparatively few of his people would be deeply verſed in languages.

I further beg leave juſt to obſerve, that though you profeſs moſt ſtrongly to decry all human authority in general, becauſe the current of it is againſt you, yet you are happy to make the moſt of every ſcrap and ſhred of it, when it is at all in your favor: I allow, that there is great danger in ſetting too high a value on any human authority whatever;

whatever; yet human authority where it keeps its proper place of ſubordination, is not without much uſe even in the inveſtigation of divine truth: therefore where faithful eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians, fathers, and commentators, above all where the noble army of martyrs, and the holy church univerſal throughout the world, are and have been agreed in any point of doctrine from the firſt eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity; though I am far from ſaying their teſtimony is infallible, yet I muſt ſay it is not to be lightly regarded, eſpecially ought no one man without much fear, diffidence, and caution to ſet up his own judgment againſt ſo great a cloud of witneſſes. We generally find that error and high ſelf-confidence go hand in hand, whilſt modeſty and humility are the inſeparable companions of truth. *The meek will he guide in judgment; the meek will he teach his way.* Pſal. xxv. 9. When Thuedas aroſe, he *boaſted himſelf to be ſomebody* [A], but Paul ſtiled himſelf

[A] *Acts* v. 36.

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the chief of ſinners, and leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints.

After all, you will have no occaſion to blame me for making too much uſe of human authority, as throughout this piece, I do not recollect that I have made one quotation, but what comes directly from the fountain of truth, *the word of God.*

But how have you ſucceeded when you come to the New Teſtament? All here is negative proof indeed; for with all your partiality to Polygamy, I bear you witneſs, that you have not even made the attempt of preſſing a ſingle text into your ſervice. All you have done, all you could do, all you have endeavored to do, is to ſhew that the New Teſtament writings, allowing you your own interpretation of them, *may be* ſo explained, as not to forbid Polygamy; but not ſo much as one text is offered to prove even the permiſſion of it.——Your grand argument is brought up again, again, again, and again, that if God allowed Polygamy under the Old Teſtament, it cannot be

ſinful

ſinful under the New; and proceeding upon this moſt erroneous hypotheſis, you bend and ſtrain every ſcripture which ſtands in your way, till you have ſilenced them from ſpeaking what they really do ſpeak, and have made them ſpeak juſt what you would have them ſpeak. But whilſt ſuch bold liberties as theſe are taken with the bleſſed word of God, can we wonder that the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, or any other popiſh abſurdities are ſwallowed down? Nay, are we to be aſtoniſhed at the folly and enthuſiaſm of one in this kingdom, who ſome years ſince (you remember well the fact) declared he ſhould never die, but ſhould be tranſlated as were Enoch and Elijah. Had any one reaſoned with him on his deluſion, might he not have ſaid, "I "ſee that two of the Old Teſtament ſaints "were tranſlated, therefore tranſlation was "then agreeable to the mind of God, the "ſcriptures of the New Teſtament are in-"tirely ſilent on this head; they leave the "matter juſt as they found it, therefore, "why may not I expect tranſlation as well

"as

" as Enoch and Elijah ?"—Indeed I think not only tranſlation, but navigation, fortification, or any other *ation*, might as readily be proved from the New Teſtament as Polygamy; beſides, that to prove a doctrine from the New Teſtament, which you yourſelf allow is not once mentioned in it, is I apprehend rather an odd manner of proving.

HAVING now, I hope, in ſome meaſure cleared the way before me, by removing many falſe ideas and miſconceptions, by which you ſtrongly incline your readers in favor of your ſyſtem, and indeed in a manner try to frighten them into a perſuaſion that the whole Chriſtian world has hitherto been in darkneſs, both in principle and practice, on the ſubject in queſtion, and that every interpreter of God's word who preceded you, has only been ringing poor Whittington's bells in their ears, to prevent their hearing diſtinctly, what God ſpeaks to them in his own written word; I ſhall now endeavor by the help of God, to conſider

ſider as briefly as poſſible, the plain obvious meaning of ſome texts of ſcripture in the New Teſtament, by which you attempt to ſupport your cauſe, though I believe you will not deny but you have met with hard work before you took your leave of them.

The firſt text I mention is that, *Matt.* v. 28. *I ſay unto you, that whoſoever looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

Without the leaſt proof as I can ſee in your favor, you inſiſt upon it, that the word *woman* here muſt mean a married woman. But why ſo? Is there nothing improper in a man, whether married or ſingle, luſting after any ſingle woman or widow? None at all upon your ſyſtem, if he means to make them his wives. But certainly you will not deny that the Greek word γυνη *mulier*, means any *woman* in general, married or unmarried, as much as the word ανηρ, *vir* means any man in general; and therefore to confine it to a married woman is to make

make a limitation to ſerve a purpoſe, where God himſelf has made none [B].

Still further does this perverſion of ſcripture appear, in your comment on that important text, ver. 32. of the ſame chapter. *I ſay unto you, that whoſoever ſhall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and ſhall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoſo marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.*

What labor and pains have you beſtowed, to convince your readers that the word αλλην, *another*, means another man's wife, who

[B] My dear friend in his elucidation of this text, in order to evade its force, obſerves, that if by a woman *here* be meant *any woman*, then a man may commit adultery by looking at his own wife. At firſt I really felt myſelf hurt at the thought, that one for whom I have ſo high a regard, ſhould deſcend to ſuch low chicanery, but I preſently recollected, *that he had been bred to the bar*, and therefore paſſed it by with a ſmile.

But the manner in which he ſpeaks of *ſpiritual expoſitors* in the ſame place, inſtead of a *ſmile*, occaſioned *a ſhake of the head.*

has

has been divorced from her huſband, though the word is as general as conſtant uſage can make it, and means any other woman, whether maid, widow, or wife. But then this plain reading of the text, for it requires no elucidation, would at once overthrow the doctrine of Polygamy; and cut up by the roots your new definition of adultery, by proving that a married man *may* commit adultery with a ſingle woman. You are rather aware indeed of the tautology which you put into our Saviour's mouth, by your interpretation of this text, but ſtill you try to get over it at all events. Let us render it as you would have it. *I ſay unto you, that whoſoever ſhall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and ſhall marry another* [that is ſay you, the wife of another man] *committeth adultery, and whoſo marrieth her which is put away,* [who muſt ſtill be the wife of another man] *committeth adultery.* Such is the tautology, not to ſay nonſenſe, which you make to proceed out of the mouth of him *who ſpake as never man ſpake;* whereas, take the words in their plain eaſy ſignification, and he that runneth

ſunneth may read, and come to the true ſenſe of them. The paſſage is mentioned by three evangeliſts, and twice by St. Matthew; only in St. Mark it ſtands double, and the crime is recorded as reciprocal on each ſide. *Whoſoever ſhall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery againſt her. And if a woman ſhall put away her huſband, and be married to another, ſhe committeth adultery.* Now I would obſerve, that the word *another* in the latter verſe, is the very ſame in the original, when it relates to the man, as the word *another* is in the former verſe, when it relates to the woman, where you ſay, it muſt agree with the antecedent ſubſtantive γυναικα, *wife*, only differing in gender; ſo that if we admit your conſtruction in the one caſe, we ought to do it in the other, and make the word αλλω agree with its antecedent ſubſtantive ανδρα *huſband*, and then the whole paſſage will run thus. "Whoſoever ſhall put away "his wife, and marry *another man's wife* "committeth adultery againſt her; and if "a woman ſhall put away her huſband, "and marry *another woman's huſband*, ſhe

" committeth adultery." The concluſion of which interpretation is this, that if any man put away his wife (except for fornication) and marry another ſingle woman or widow, he commits no adultery; and if a woman put away her huſband, and marry another ſingle man or a widower, ſhe commits no adultery.—Alas! what will not evaſion fly to!

The liberty you take in changing the word αλλην for αλλοτριαν muſt not paſs unnoticed. I have conſulted all the three evangeliſts where the paſſage is recorded, and no ſuch word is to be found: St. Matthew and St. Mark both have αλλην, and St. Luke alone uſes the word ετεραν which is nearly the ſame as αλλην *another*, *any other woman*; but the word αλλοτριαν which you have introduced, means *belonging to another*; or when joined to γυναικα *the wife of another man*. Now can we ſuppoſe, that if our Lord wiſhed to have his own meaning underſtood in this moſt important matter, he would have uſed an expreſſion which was very liable to be miſtaken, and have left it

to

to you or me to make an amendment in his language, by leaving out one word, and ſubſtituting another? but inſtead of ſpeaking ambiguouſly, he has vouchſafed to give us one of the plaineſt expreſſions imaginable, and which in its eaſy literal ſenſe is capable of no other conſtruction than that which our tranſlators have given us. Nor does your *facetious gentleman's* ſtory of the *glaſs* and *leathern bottles*, at all make in your favor, but quite point blank againſt you; though I allow that a joke may ſometimes tickle the fancy of the tired reader, and cauſe him to miſtake witticiſm for argument. And here I may obſerve, that when you were entertaining us with the ſtory of Harlequin getting into a quart bottle, (vol. II. p. 352.) you might have added, that he alſo jumped down his own throat, which was not only *advertiſed* at the ſame time with the quart bottle buſineſs about thirty years ago, but I myſelf ſaw it attempted at one of the theatres; though I muſt own with not much better ſucceſs than a friend of mine attempts to prove, *that any woman whatever,*

whatever, means another man's divorced wife.

My friend would illuſtrate this by that text, 1 *Cor.* x. 19. ὑπο αλλης συνειδησεως which is tranſlated *another man's conſcience*; but the words are ſtrictly *another conſcience*, and the addition of *man's* is inſerted by way of expletive, and becauſe another conſcience and another man's conſcience are ſynonimous terms, ſeeing no man can have more than one conſcience.—But this is no argument at all, why another woman muſt mean *another man's divorced wife*, unleſs you can prove that every woman living ſtands in that predicament.

But to return, You will ſay, that our Lord in this paſſage is not ſpeaking of Polygamy, but only of divorce. True, the queſtion put by the Phariſees, proves that he is ſpeaking of divorce; but in ſo doing, he is naturally led to ſhew what that crime is, for which divorce is lawful, and this is adultery; which if there be any meaning

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in words, he tells us may be committed when any married man takes to himſelf any other woman beſides his own wife, be that other woman as before obſerved, a virgin, a widow, or a wife. And if we conſult the context, we ſhall perceive that in the reaſoning which our Lord makes uſe of, in order to ſatisfy the inquiry of the Phariſees concerning divorce, he refers them to the original inſtitution of marriage. *Have ye not read* (ſaith he) *that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female, and ſaid, for this cauſe ſhall a man leave father and mother, and ſhall cleave to his wife, and they twain ſhall be one fleſh? Wherefore they are no more twain but one fleſh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put aſunder.* As if he had ſaid, "Know "ye not that when God created Adam and "Eve, he made the one male and the other "female, and ordained that they ſhould "be faithful to each other, and keep the "marriage bed inviolable: from thence-"forth therefore, the huſband and the "wife are no longer to be eſteemed as ſe-"parate perſons, but though twain or two

" in number, are one fleſh in the ſight of " God; upon which account, a man muſt " leave his father and his mother, and muſt " cleave unto his wife, not only in body, " but in heart and affection. Therefore " ye Phariſees do greatly err, when you " ſuppoſe that it is lawful for a man to " put away his wife for every or for any " cauſe; for though for the hardneſs of " your hearts this practice was ſuffered by " the law of Moſes, yet from the begin- " ning, when God firſt inſtituted the bond " of marriage, it was otherwiſe, for he " then made only one man for one woman, " and one woman for one man, wherefore " I now tell you, that whoſoever putteth " away one wife, and marrieth another " woman in her ſtead, committeth adul- " tery, and whoſo marrieth her that is put " away committeth adultery."

Certainly, no one can ſay, that this is any forced comment upon our Lord's words on this very important paſſage, but a plain eaſy paraphraſe upon the text, which ſo far from countenancing, directly mili-

tates

tates againſt Polygamy, and actually condemns it as adultery.

After much pains indeed, to ſtate a diſtinction between the huſband and wife being *legally* two, and *numerically* two, you ſeem to wonder at what you call the legerdemain of thoſe, who ſuppoſe that the huſband and wife mean only two perſons, or *two and no more*. But ſurely, the art of legerdemain is much more to be admired in him, who can change εἰς δύο they two, into they three or they four, juſt as he pleaſes, and who by the ſame art can reduce Solomon and his ſeven hundred wives into εἰς δύο *they twain*.

The apoſtle Paul alludes to that original text, *Gen.* ii. 24. in his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, ch. v. 31. where he is treating of the love and union which ought to ſubſiſt between the huſband and the wife. *For this cauſe ſhall a man leave his father and his mother, and ſhall be joined to his wife, and they two ſhall be one fleſh.* And then he adds, *This is a great myſtery, but I ſpeak concerning Chriſt and the church.*—Nothing

thing can be clearer, nothing more reſtrictive of one man to one woman, and one woman to one man, than theſe words of the apoſtle.—But my friend would draw a concluſion in his favor from this text, by obſerving, that the church or ſpouſe of Chriſt, being made up of many members, and having only one huſband, therefore the analogy between Chriſt and his church is much better ſupported by the Polygamiſt than by the Monogamiſt.—But he ſhould recollect, that though the believers which conſtitute the ſpouſe of Chriſt, are indeed *many* when conſidered *individually*, yet when conſidered *collectively*, in which light the ſcripture always does conſider them, they are ſtill only ONE BODY; unleſs therefore, my friend can prove, (what the amorous Polygamiſt would not wiſh him to prove) that a man may have three or four wives, and theſe wives have but *one body* among them, the argument on which he hangs his concluſion, is no better than a rotten rope, which being pulled too tight, ſnaps in the middle, *and down drops Polygamy*.

I intended in this place to have introduced a comment or paraphraſe upon the whole ſeventh chapter of St. Paul's firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, but conſidering how much I had already ſaid on that chapter a few pages back, let me only intreat the reader "to lay down my book and take "up a better," and let him turn to that chapter as it came in perfect purity out of God's own hands, unmixed by paraphraſes, or unadulterated with human comments; and when he has read the whole of it throughout, let him ceaſe to wonder if he can, that there ever exiſted a man of ſenſe, learning, and piety, who could believe that chapter, and yet maintain Polygamy.

Suffer me however, juſt to aſk a few queſtions on thoſe words, *Defraud ye not one the other except it be with conſent for a time.*

1. Can more than two perſons poſſibly be included in thoſe words, "*one the* "*other?*"

2dly,

2dly, Is not the conſent of the wife as much included as the conſent of the huſband, in the apoſtle's injunction?

3dly, Does not a huſband more effectually defraud a wife of the rights of the marriage bed, by taking another woman, than by continence? In the former caſe he defrauds her *poſitively*; in the latter only *negatively*.

4thly, Was there ever an affectionate wife in the world that would give her free *conſent* to be ſo defrauded?

Now remember my requeſt, and read the chapter throughout with reverence and attention.

THERE is yet one text of ſcripture, which as you ſeem to lay much ſtreſs upon, I ſhall beg particularly to conſider. The words are found, *Tit.* i. 6. *If any* (i. e. if any elder) *be the huſband of one wife.* From hence you conclude, that as by the apoſtle's direction the elders were to be choſen out of thoſe who were huſbands of one wife, therefore there muſt certainly be among the

the Chriſtian laity many who had more wives than one. But we may juſt as well infer, that becauſe the elder women were to be ſelected out of thoſe who had each of them been the wife of one man, (1 *Tim.* v. 9.) therefore there were many other Chriſtian women who had more huſbands than one. The words directly anſwer to one another in both places. *The huſband of one wife*, or *of one woman*; and the wife of one huſband, or *of one man*, and the purpoſes for which they were choſen, were in many caſes the ſame [C]; ſo that as you interpret the one text with regard to the woman, who was to be choſen as a deaconeſs from among the widows, that ſhe muſt be one who had only been once married; ſo you muſt alſo interpret the other text which relates to the man, (whether prieſt or deacon) that he muſt be choſen out of ſuch as had only been once married. —But you ſay that text, 1 *Tim.* v. 9. which relates to the widow, is in the paſt tenſe, *having been* the wife of one man,

[C] More particularly where the man was choſen to the office of a deacon. See 1 *Tim.* iii. 12.

whereas

whereas the text *Tit.* i. 6. is in the preſent tenſe, *if any* be *the huſband of one wife.* I anſwer, that if this had not been the caſe, the woman would not have been a widow, but a wife, whereas the choice was to be made, of ſuch an one as *had been*, not of ſuch as *then was*, the wife of one man, becauſe a married woman being in ſubjection *to the law of her huſband*, and at his diſpoſal, could not ſo properly attend to the affairs of the church, where ſhe was to be employed in performing different offices of relief and kindneſs to the ſick and diſtreſſed members of it, as a widow could: whereas the objection did not lie ſo ſtrongly on the man's ſide, whoſe province it is not to take upon him the care of houſhold matters: But ſtill the difference of tenſe, makes no difference of ſenſe, in the point before us, and therefore, what the paſſage means in the one place it means in the other, viz. that both the man and the woman ſhould only have been once married, that they might attend to the affairs of the church with leſs diſtraction, by not being burdened with family encumbrances.——And here, I

muſt

muſt further obſerve, that in paraphraſing on theſe texts, you have made ſome conceſſions which are not very friendly to the doctrine you eſpouſe, I mean that of Polygamy; (for it evidently appears by the chain and connection of both your volumes, that this is the great Diana which you would ſet up, and for the ſake of which the whole was written) for you grant that the man to be choſen to be a biſhop or preſbyter, ought not to have two wives at a time. But why not? can that be wrong under the goſpel, which was right under the law? Is Paul come to contradict Moſes? Elkanah the prieſt, notwithſtanding he had all the duties of his office to attend to, had two wives at a time, and why may not any Chriſtian prieſt or preſbyter have the ſame? Thus ought you to reaſon, if you would be conſiſtent with yourſelf, elſe you immediately deſtroy the building which you have all along been attempting to ſet up, "That whatſoever "God allowed under the Old Teſtament "diſpenſation, he cannot diſallow under "the New." Your argument therefore, once more proves too much, and lays you under

under the neceſſity either of allowing Polygamy on the woman's ſide, or of diſallowing it on the man's: or otherwiſe, you are conſtrained to grant, that God for wiſe reaſons has thought fit to forbid a plurality of wives to his miniſters under the goſpel, though he permitted it under the law. If you ſtill urge that this prohibition was more eſpecially confined to the diſtreſſed or infant ſtate of the church, I will not diſpute the point with you; but this is a further argument in my favor, and verifies my aſſertion, "That God as ſovereign of his "creatures, has full right to diſallow and "forbid at one period, what he allows and "even commands at another, according as "he ſees fit that times and circumſtances "ſhould alter; and that ſtill God changeth "not, neither in his own nature, nor in "his will, ſince the one great end he has "in view is his own glory, and the good "of his church and people."

HAVING endeavored to reſtore ſeveral texts of ſcripture to their original meaning, which appeared to me to be manifeſtly diſtorted

torted by your explanation of them in favor of Polygamy, I proceed to make a few ſhort obſervations on what you have ſaid more particularly relative to marriage.

Most juſtly you condemn the church of Rome for her unſcriptural injunctions of celibacy, as well as ſome of the primitive fathers, for their unauthorized declamations againſt ſecond marriages: but it is eaſy to conceive, that theſe errors might be adopted, by extending thoſe paſſages of ſcripture to after-periods of the church, which were only deſigned for the primitive and diſtreſſed ages of it, which will therefore admit of ſome excuſe, though not for the church of Rome, yet for the earlieſt fathers who lived in thoſe ages, for what they have advanced in thoſe points; and certainly our Lord and his apoſtles, more eſpecially St. Paul in the ſeventh chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, do under particular circumſtances, and where the caſe of the parties will admit of it, give the preference to a ſingle life, and encourage widows and widowers not to embark again in the married

ſtate,

ſtate, without they find themſelves under the neceſſity of ſo doing.—Some humble apology therefore may be made, though not for Rome herſelf, yet for the primitive fathers who have written ſuch extravagant encomiums of virginity, by reflecting, that they lived in thoſe very times for which all thoſe texts which ſpeak in favor of it were intended; but although in after-ages *ſuperſtition* ſo far kept the throne, that ſhe attributed I know not what merit to an unnatural celibacy, and even ordained ſanguinary laws for the puniſhment of prieſts who ſhould marry, in direct defiance of God's great command, *increaſe and multiply*; ſtill this proves nothing but that ſuperſtition is, and always will be ſuperſtition, but it adds not the weight of a grain to your arguments in favor of Polygamy: on the contrary, I ſhould not wonder, if it were to be urged againſt you, perhaps many years hence, "That amidſt the various cor-
"ruptions and ſuperſtitions which from
"time to time infeſted the Chriſtian church,
"relative to divorce, marriage, celibacy,
"&c.

" &c. at laſt in the eighteenth century, " flouriſhed one *Martin Madan*, a perſon of " great learning, judgment, and piety, who " being determined to run as far as he could " from the Romiſh church in theſe points, " leaped into the other extreme, and actu- " ally wrote two volumes in defence of Po- " lygamy." But I hope the eccleſiaſtical writer will immediately add, that " being " convinced of his error, he recanted it " with true Chriſtian candor and contrition " of heart."

Whilſt I am on this ſubject, I cannot help obſerving how repeatedly you have brought up that ſtatute of Henry VIII. which enacted, that no prieſt ſhould marry on pain of death. And what is the concluſion you wiſh to draw from it? Why, that from the unſcriptural abſurdity of that ſtatute, a direct contrary one ought to be enacted, and that becauſe no prieſt might then be permitted to marry *one* wife, now any layman at leaſt, ſhould have the liberty of marrying two or more; which is juſt as

good reaſoning, as if I were to ſay, that if that parliament had been abſurd enough to paſs a law that every prieſt ſhould have his noſe cut off, therefore another act ought now to paſs, for any layman to have two or more noſes [D]. Or becauſe the French capuchin friar you mention told you, it was contrary to the rules of his order ever to wear a pair of ſhoes at all; therefore it was now proper and expedient for a man to wear two or three pair at once.

But leaving the fooleries and extravagancies of popery to thoſe who chooſe to be

[D] So far is the credulity of popery from ſuppoſing that a prieſt may not well enough exiſt without a noſe, that it can even believe a prieſt may live without a head.—Whoever has viſited the convent of St. Dennis near Paris, has ſeen the image of that Saint in ſilver with his head in his own hands; and has been told with a very grave face, by the eccleſiaſtic who ſhews the treaſures of the church, that St. Dennis (from whom the convent takes its name) having ſuffered decapitation for the ſake of religion, afterwards took up his head in his hands, and carried it from Paris to the place where the monaſtery now ſtands, which if I remember right, is a diſtance of about ſix miles.

amuſed

amuſed with them, I paſs on to a circumſtance which you mention, vol. I. 212, *note*, concerning ſome of our principal reformers, at the head of whom you have deſervedly placed that great champion of the Proteſtant faith, Martin Luther. I mean, "their "*unanimous* agreement at *Wittemberg*, that "it was not contrary to the divine law, "for a man to have two wives at once." On which authority you inform us, that *Philip, Landgrave of Heſſe*, actually married a *ſecond wife*, his *firſt* being alive.

The caſe of the *Landgrave* of *Heſſe* was a very particular one, and is taken from an authority which you do not much chooſe to avow. If I judge right you have gathered it from *Polygamia Triumphatrix*, p. 554. A performance which I perceive has been of ſignal uſe to you. The fact was, that the wife of the *Landgrave* found herſelf for eſpecial reaſons incapable of cohabiting with her own huſband, and he found himſelf under a ſcriptural neceſſity of avoiding celibacy. To deſcend to the *minutiæ* of this

matter, would lead me into a diſſertation which I am ſure the delicate reader would wiſh me to avoid: ſuffice it ſay in general, that they could not live together as man and wife. The caſe was referred to the conſideration of the proteſtant divines, among whom were *Luther*, *Melanchton*, and *Bucer*, who after great deliberation and caution and not without much diffidence, delivered their opinion, that under ſuch circumſtances, the Landgrave might be permitted to take another wife.

But though I have examined various parts of that laborious treatiſe (*Pol. Tri.*) I cannot any where diſcover the quotation you have brought and marked with inverted commas, as put by way of a queſtion, to the aforeſaid divines at Wittemberg, "Whether for a "man to have two wives at once was con-"trary to the divine law?" Nor do I ſee any thing of their *unanimous* anſwer, "That "it was not;" therefore I hope if you publiſh another edition of *Thelyphthora*, you will tell us from what ſource you have derived

rived your authority for this propoſition to the divines, and their *unanimous* reply to it.

But ſurely Luther inſtead of being that firm inflexible and ſteady character he was ever eſteemed to be, muſt have been the moſt puſillanimous, wavering, and inconſiſtent of all mortals, if he had delivered the opinion you charge him with, if the circumſtances of the caſe had not been very particular: for looking over *John Sleidan's* hiſtory of the Reformation in Germany, in order to ſee if any thing was mentioned there concerning the caſe you allude to of *Philip, Landgrave of Heſſe*, though I met with nothing at all on that head throughout the whole book, yet I found the following remarkable paſſages from a work of Luther's (which had the full approbation of Melanchton, Bucer, and the other proteſtant divines) relative to the *Anabaptiſts* of that time which will clearly ſhew what was the opinion of thoſe great reformers on the matter of Polygamy.

" The evil Spirit who endeavors to de-
" ſtroy the Chriſtian religion, does not
" uſually make choice of Polygamy for the
" compaſſing his deſigns, he knows the in-
" famy and wickedneſs of ſuch a practice
" is ſo notorious that all men abhor it."

Again. " To marry as many wives as
" his lewdneſs has a mind to, can be the
" contrivance of none but ſome raw un-
" practiced devil."

Now from theſe extracts which I have tranſcribed *verbatim*, can any man in the world ſuppoſe, that *Luther*, *Melanchton*, and *Bucer*, at the very ſame period that they were condemning Polygamy in ſuch ſevere terms among the *Anabaptiſts*, were abetting and encouraging it in the *Landgrave* of *Heſſe?* The thought is ſo abſurd and extravagant, that it cannot be harbored for a moment: I would therefore humbly propoſe an amendment in your words, " this
" proves what they thought" [viz. what *Luther*, *Bucer*, and *Melanchton* thought on the

the matter of Polygamy] "but by no means that they thought *right*," and would inſert in their ſtead, "This proves what I would have them think, but by no means what they did think."

The above-named learned, pious, and faithful hiſtorian *John Sleidan* giving an account of that peſtilent ſect called Anabaptiſts, (which was totally different from thoſe we now call Baptiſts) tells us, that "they introduced Polygamy;" that *John* of *Leyden* their chief leader or king, commanded his twelve teachers to declare, "that a man was not obliged to confine "himſelf to one wife, but might marry as "many as he pleaſed;" that thereupon "they harangued upon matrimony from "their pulpits for three days together; "ſoon after which, he (*John* of *Leyden*) "married no leſs than three wives."—That "moſt of their party had no leſs than five "wives a man. That this impious wretch "who was their principal prophet, made one

"of

" of his wives kneel down and beheaded her " with his own hands in the market place."

How am I grieved to find my worthy friend in ſuch company! but indeed I can ſee no difference between his doctrine and theirs in the point of Polygamy, only that theſe people did not go ſuch lengths as to take their wives before they were married to them by an external ceremony, whereas he explodes every thing of this ſort as ſuperſtitious prieſtcraft.

We differ very little if at all, in our ſentiments on the marriage act. I have long conſidered it not only as moſt inimical to the intereſts of the nation, but as ſtanding in direct oppoſition to thoſe great commands of God himſelf, *Be fruitful and multiply. Thoſe whom God hath joined together, let no man put aſunder.*

Whether or no the mere intercourſe of a man with a virgin conſtitute a marriage in the ſight of God, I will not diſpute with you.

you. Certainly, the man in ſuch caſe, ought by the law of God, to make her his wife, as I have elſewhere obſerved: yet, I think it both a dangerous and an unſcriptural poſition to ſay, that ſhe really is his wife, independent of any law or ceremony whatever: which law or ceremony, however it may vary, according to times, circumſtances, and the cuſtom of different nations, is that ſolemn act of recognition which binds the parties together, making them one in a legal or political ſenſe, and diſtinguiſhing their intercourſe from that of brute beaſts.

When God created our firſt parents in Paradiſe, he did not leave the man to take the woman to be his wife; but it is ſaid, "*God brought the woman to the man.*" It is true, this act, form, or ceremony, call it which you will, was immediately between God and the parties, but ſtill as our firſt parents alone were then created, it was the only one that *could* exiſt, and therefore your remark, that there was no *prieſt* on the occaſion

caſion was totally needleſs. To this form or ceremony however, moſt civilized and indeed even uncivilized nations ſeem to have had reſpect in their marriages from that time; and particularly our own church, by appointing a perſon who is uſually called *the father*, (whether he be really ſo or not) to give the woman to the man, and I apprehend it is in alluſion to this original form and inſtitution, that the author of the *two ſermons* ſo much quoted (and ſo much diſapproved) by you, ſays, that the prieſt or miniſter now *acts in God's ſtead*, by receiving the woman from the father's hand, and delivering her to her intended huſband: And I remember to have once ſeen a Jew's wedding at *Amſterdam*, where beſides ſeveral other ceremonies, ſomething of the ſame form was obſerved.

Here I muſt beg leave to ſtate another caſe for your ſolution.

Suppoſe a woman to have been ſeduced by any man, whether married or ſingle; or ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe ſhe freely conſents to give herſelf up for a time to any man; let us go further ſtill, and ſuppoſe ſhe were even a common proſtitute: afterwards ſhe is truly ſorry and penitent for what ſhe has done. Now ought ſuch a woman to marry, (though I can hardly yet tell what you mean by the word) or muſt ſhe for ever live unmarried? —If you ſay ſhe may lawfully marry, then what becomes of *your own* definition of marriage, ſeeing by that definition ſhe was in the ſight of God, the true wife of the firſt man who was connected with her, and conſequently if ſhe have commerce with any other ſhe is an adultereſs, and the man with whom ſhe has that commerce is an adulterer. If you ſay ſhe may *not* marry any other man than him who was firſt connected with her, then in all probability you condemn the poor creature to all the temptations of a ſingle life. So that in the one caſe lewdneſs and adultery, in the other celibacy and depopulation muſt be the effect of your ſyſtem.

But

But I avoid any further diſputation on this point, eſpecially as you perfectly agree with me on the propriety and expediency of ſome outward recognition of marriage before the world, for the purpoſes of civil ſociety; and as I heartily acquieſce with you, that whether this be done by an eccleſiaſtic, or by a juſtice of the peace, as it was in the laſt century, is of no eſſential importance.

Before I diſmiſs this ſubject, I cannot help taking notice, that under your chapter of marriage, you bring your favorite text to ſhew that nothing can be added to or diminiſhed from a marriage in the ſight of God, when there has been an act of union in the parties; which text however rather contradicts than confirms your aſſertion. The words are theſe: *If a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he ſhall ſurely endow her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuſe to give her unto him, he ſhall pay money according to the dowry of virgins*

gins [E]. But if ſhe were really his wife before in the ſight of God, by the act which had paſſed between them, it was not in the father's power to ſet up his own againſt the divine authority. So that either ſhe was not his wife, or elſe the inſtitution of God gave place to the will of the father.—This ſeems a clear proof that ſomething elſe beſides the mere knowledge of a woman's perſon was neceſſary to conſtitute a marriage under the Jewiſh law; not to mention that the words *he ſhall endow her to be his wife*, plainly intimate that ſhe was *not* his wife till ſuch endowment, notwithſtanding the intercourſe he had had with her.

The like may be ſaid in the caſe of the woman of Samaria, who *had had five huſbands*, and when our Lord held his conference with her, was living with one who *was not her huſband*. But why not her huſband, if the five firſt were dead, and the preſent one had taken poſſeſſion of her per-

[E] *Exod.* xxii. 16, 17.

ſon?

ſon? Upon your plan, nothing elſe was neceſſary to make them man and wife: You therefore very unfairly, becauſe without the leaſt authority, ſuppoſe that one of the five firſt was then living.

Since I wrote the above, I have looked a ſecond time into the Monthly Review for October 1780, and muſt acknowledge that what the Reviewers have ſaid concerning our Lord's conference with the woman of Samaria, is ſo much more to the purpoſe, and ſo much better expreſſed than in my own words, that I beg to refer the reader to their remarks.

In the Review for the next month, is alſo a very ſatisfactory ſolution of the text, *Deut.* xxi. 15. *If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firſt born ſon be her's that was hated: Then it ſhall be, when he maketh his ſons to inherit that which he hath, that he*

he may not make the ſon of the beloved firſt-born before the ſon of the hated, which is indeed the firſt-born: but he ſhall acknowledge the ſon of the hated for the firſt-born, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath, &c.

As our preſent tranſlation of this paſſage coincides with Mr. Madan's opinion, he is happy to admit it; had it been otherwiſe, he would have ſheltered himſelf under the wing of his favorite commentator *Montanus*, who renders the words, *cum fuerint viro duæ uxores. If there ſhall have been to a man two wives*; or *if a man SHALL HAVE HAD two wives*; by which verſion there is no proof at all that he had the two wives both at once. Nay, theſe words, her's that *was* hated (not that *is* hated) being in the paſt tenſe imply the contrary. But admitting that he had, ſtill the text carries not with it the leaſt glimpſe of an approbation of Polygamy on God's part, but is merely directory of what ſhall be done with the children by each wife.——It is ſaid,

Exod.

Exod. xxii. 2, 3. *If a man ſhall ſteal an ox or a ſheep and kill it or ſell it, he ſhall reſtore five oxen for an ox, and four ſheep for a ſheep.* But we have juſt the ſame reaſon to ſay, that God approves of *ſheep-ſtealing*, as that he approves of Polygamy, becauſe in both caſes he gives directions what ſhall be done: in the one caſe, the thief was to make reſtitution; in the other, the Bigamiſt was not to add one evil to another, by diſinheriting the eldeſt ſon of the hated wife, and giving his ſubſtance to the ſon of the favorite wife.

I cannot take my leave of what the Reviewers have ſaid on *Thelyphthora*, without remarking, that I think thoſe gentlemen have born rather too hard on Mr. Madan, in ſuppoſing that he was guilty of any want of reverence either intended or not intended, *towards Chriſt or towards the ſacred ſcriptures*, becauſe he ſays, "that if it "could be proved that in any one inſtance, "Chriſt added to or diminiſhed from the "law of God, by ordaining any thing contrary

trary to or inconſiſtent with it, it would be making him a greater impoſtor than Mahomet." I doubt not, but Mr. Madan ſo far from thinking that that ſuch an expreſſion might excite "*emotions of indignation or diſguſt*," meant by this forcible language againſt the idea of ſetting Chriſt and the divine law at variance to ſhew his own high veneration for both.—And indeed when we conſider that the apoſtle John teſtifying his zeal againſt infidelity, ſays, *he that believeth not God hath made him a liar*, I think Mr. Madan's mode of ſpeech is very juſtifiable on ſcripture authority. Upon which account I ſhould hope that the Reviewers, if they think there is any argument in what I advance, would candidly retract what they have ſaid of my miſtaken, but ſtill worthy friend, (againſt whom they certainly have ſufficient advantage in other points) for having uttered, what at the firſt peruſal they judged to be *ſhocking* and *indecent*, and *tending to wound the ear of the modeſt and humble Chriſtian*. But if they ſhould ſtill retain their opinion,

I hope they will pardon me for the liberty I have taken in endeavoring to vindicate one for whom I profeſs a ſincere regard, ſo far as I believe his intention to have been good, and his words capable of a favorable conſtruction.

Still another obſervation occurs to me on the text, *Exod.* xxii. 16, 17. which being nearly the ſame with that, *Deut.* xxii. 28, 29. I ſhall juſt mention what I have to ſay on them both together in this place, though perhaps I ſhould have been rather more methodical in doing it in another. I have before remarked, that theſe texts rather contain a part of the judicial law, in the midſt of which they ſtand recorded, than of the moral; and ſhew that the command of God which enjoined, that *if a man had enticed a maid and humbled her, he ſhould make her his wife, and not put her away all his days*, was rather intended as a puniſhment to be inflicted on the offender for his baſeneſs and lewdneſs, than as a ſanction given by God to Polygamy.—But whether

whether this law was ever enforced when the man was a married man, remains yet to be proved. You have indeed taken much pains to demonſtrate that *a man* here muſt mean *any man*, married or not married, becauſe your ſyſtem cannot ſtand without it: But if I allow this, how can you diſallow that *a woman* means *any woman*, married or not married? and yet you abſolutely refuſe to grant this, in your interpretation of that text, *Whoſoever looketh on* a woman *to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*; as alſo where it is ſaid, *Whoſoever ſhall put away his wife and marry another committeth adultery.* In both theſe inſtances you inſiſt that *a woman* muſt mean a married woman only, becauſe otherwiſe Polygamy cannot ſtand.

The more I conſider the primitive inſtitution of marriage, the more I am convinced that Polygamy is not leſs contrary to the law of nature, than to the law of God: for

I. One woman only was created and given for the uſe and comfort of one man, whilſt that man and woman were in a ſtate of innocence in Paradiſe; and it is the buſineſs of Chriſtianity to call us back as much as poſſible to that ſtate.

II. When God peopled the world a ſecond time, after the flood, it was without Polygamy, four men and four women only, who were wives to Noah and his three ſons, were commanded to go into the ark [F]; and from them was the whole earth peopled.

III. Without entering into a minute diſcuſſion of your calculations concerning the exact number of males and females which are born in different nations, I believe it is a matter generally agreed on, that the males throughout the world are nearly one fifth more than the females [G]; ſo that if Po-

[F] *Gen.* vii. 13.

[G] *Siiſſmileh* Provoſt of St. Peter's at Berlin, made a calculation ſome years ago, by which it appeared, that throughout the King of Pruſſia's dominions, there were about 105 males to 100 females.

lygamy

lygamy were univerſally practiſed, numbers of women muſt of neceſſity go without huſbands, and thereby God's great deſign of forming the ſexes for each other, muſt be fruſtrated.

IV. If *no man can ſerve two maſters, becauſe he will love the one and hate the other, or elſe he will hold to the one and deſpiſe the other*; how much leſs can one man love, cheriſh, and comfort alike two wives? This ſeems ſo abſolutely impoſſible, that I ſee not how any thing like God's original appointment of marriage and the mutual happineſs of man and wife, can be maintained upon the principles of Polygamy; nay, ſo far from it, that it appears to me, that the only happy marriages, or rather the leaſt unhappy ones, muſt be thoſe where there is the moſt indifference between the parties; for where there is true love and affection, jealouſy, if it finds ground to reſt on, will be hard at work, and that being the moſt tormenting of all paſſions, whatever is the cauſe of exciting it, had better be abſent

than preſent, conſequently the woman's hatred of her huſband would make her leſs miſerable than her love for him.—For any one to aſſert that a woman may have a true love and affection for her huſband, and yet feel no jealouſy at ſeeing him attached and given up to another, is at once to prove himſelf totally deſtitute of all ſenſibility, and ignorant of all the workings of human nature.—If therefore no man can (as before obſerved) *ſerve two maſters*, there is ſtill a greater impoſſibility that one man ſhould, in the ſcriptural ſenſe of the expreſſion, cleave to more than one wife at a time, viz. in heart, ſpirit, and affection, as well as by a bodily union. Of this you are ſenſible, and therefore you would confine this *cleaving to the wife* merely to the latter, which certainly does not carry with it that purity of ſentiment which the ſcripture language means to convey, and which is well illuſtrated by *cleaving unto the Lord:* i. e. having communion and fellowſhip with him; in which ſenſe only the union between

tween the huſband and wife is compared with that which ſubſiſts between Chriſt and his church.

In all theſe inſtances the law of God, and the law of nature are ſo blended together, that they cannot be ſeparated.

I cannot come to a concluſion without making ſome few obſervations on the advertiſement which immediately follows the title of your book. I mean not however to call in queſtion what you ſay of the *importance* or of the *intereſting* tendency of your TREATISE, nor whether you have indeed ſo mixed "the *utile dulci* as to have avoided that *tireſome dryneſs* which uſually attends treatiſe-writing, and to have introduced *much variety of entertaining matter*." This affects not the grand queſtion at all: therefore you are to think of your THELYPHTHORA on theſe points, juſt as you pleaſe, and your readers will think of them as they pleaſe. What I object againſt in that

that advertiſement, is a very poſitive aſſertion, which ſeems hung out in the frontiſpiece, in order to ſtrike the reader with horror, and to prejudice him in your favor, that "in the eye of our municipal laws, "women are of leſs conſequence than the "beaſts of the field; for it is *leſs penal* to "ſeduce, defile, and abandon to proſtitu-"tion and ruin a thouſand women mar-"ried or unmarried, than to ſteal, kill, or "even maliciouſly to maim or wound an ox "or a ſheep." In proof of this you refer to 22 and 23 Car. II. ch. 7, &c.—9 Geo. I. ch. 22.—I had like to have ſaid, that there is a moſt palpable *falſity* in this aſſertion, but I will recall the word, and inſtead of *falſity* we will read *fallacy*. It is true, the above ſtatutes make it felony to ſteal, kill, or maliciouſly wound an ox or a ſheep, but what proof is this, that "women are of "leſs conſequence than the beaſts of the "field?" or indeed where is the analogy between our laws relative to the one and to the other, unleſs you can demonſtrate from the acts which you have quoted, that

it is leſs criminal to *ſteal, kill,* or *maliciouſly wound* a wife or virgin, than to *ſteal, kill,* or *maliciouſly wound an ox or a ſheep?* Suffer me therefore to inform you, that the perſons of all women are ſo amply protected by our municipal laws, and their chaſtity is held ſo ſacred, that not only the violation of it againſt their will is death to the offender without benefit of clergy, but even an *attempt* to commit a rape, is puniſhable by one of the moſt ignominious ſentences that can be inflicted, viz. ſtanding on the pillory, and this protection is not only extended to a wife or a virgin, but even to the moſt abandoned proſtitute; and if the female be under ten years of age, then, even though ſhe ſhould conſent to the act, the corrupter of her is adjudged to forfeit his life.—Where the females are of marriageable age, whether they themſelves be married or not, though they ſhould have had an intercourſe with any man by their freeſt conſent, ſtill ſuch man is liable to be ſeverely fined, and to pay damages in proportion to his ability to the father or huſband of the

the woman. To all this may be added, that to keep a brothel is puniſhable by fine, impriſonment, or pillory, according to the ſentence of the court before which the party has been tried and convicted.

It may indeed appear rather preſumptuous for a country juſtice of the peace (and I confeſs, we are moſt of us a very blundering wrong-headed tribe) to pretend to remind you who are ſo well ſkilled in all parts of our conſtitution of theſe things; but as we ourſelves are ſeldom above receiving our inſtructions from our clerks, and are ready to ſign (without reading) whatever they put before us, I flatter myſelf you will not think I mean to call in queſtion your knowledge of, or acquaintance with any of the eſtabliſhed laws of the nation, becauſe I juſt take the liberty of whiſpering in your ear, what our clerks ſo frequently do to us, "Perhaps your worſhip "does not *immediately recollect* that ſuch "and ſuch a ſtatute ſays ſo and ſo".

After

After all, there are certain caſes wherein we have reaſon to lament that our laws puniſh petty offenders with the utmoſt rigor, whilſt the moſt notorious villains are ſuffered to go free. And yet it is not poſſible for the wiſeſt legiſlature to guard againſt this, nor is it owing to any defect in our preſent ſyſtem, that it is ſo. The cauſe of this evil lies in the corrupt ſtate of human nature. The cure muſt be looked for only at the hand of divine grace. Among theſe is the puniſhing with death, the afflicted wretch who ſteals money, goods, or even meat to ſupport life to the value of one ſhilling, whilſt the far greater robbers who increaſe their hoards by exorbitant premiums and uſury, or who borrow large ſums, perhaps to the diſtreſs of many families, without proſpect of payment, in order to ſupport their own extravagance, cannot be laid hold on as criminals.—And yet what can be done in ſuch a caſe? To form proper penal laws againſt the two latter of theſe characters would be exceeding difficult, and the execution of them

them ſtill more ſo.—To repeal thoſe already made, and to ſuffer poverty to be pleaded in behalf of theft or robbery, would immediately expoſe the perſons and property of every man, to all the horrors of rapine and plunder: and you of all people living, would dread the enacting of any law for ſuperſeding or mitigating the puniſhment of offenders, as I have frequently heard you ſay, and perhaps very juſtly, that ſparing ſo many thieves and robbers from the gallows, is the cauſe of their increaſe. We may invent remedies for ſuch or ſuch evils, and when we have invented them, they may turn out worſe than the diſeaſes they are meant to cure. Among theſe remedies is that of introducing Polygamy by way of preventing adultery and fornication; and it calls to my mind a ſtory which the famed Voltaire once told me at Geneva, of a French clown, who jumped into a river in order to eſcape a ſhower of rain.

However,

However, that the doctrine of *Thelyphthora* does indeed tend to make *women of leſs conſequence than the beaſts of the field*, perhaps the following inſtance will ſerve to evince.

I am now for the laſt time to ſuppoſe Polygamy eſtabliſhed by law in this kingdom; and I will alſo ſuppoſe that it has been ſo for about five or ſix years. My ſervant knocks at my ſtudy door, puts a paper into my hand, and tells me that a poor woman who is weeping in the paſſage with three young children, begs me to read it over; I find it to be as follows:

"THE HUMBLE PETITION OF
"Mary, wife of John Williams, ſhew-
"eth, that your poor petitioner has been
"married to the ſaid John Williams, a
"labouring man, for the ſpace of ten years
"and upwards; that he made your petiti-
"oner a good and an induſtrious huſband,
"and maintained his family very decently
"till about four years ago, when he mar-
"ried

" ried another woman, by whom he has
" two more children; and after that mar-
" ried a third wife, who has at different
" times beaten your petitioner, as alſo his
" ſecond wife, in the moſt barbarous man-
" ner, and turned us both out of doors:
" beſides that the wages, which the ſaid
" John Williams earned by his work, were
" but juſt ſufficient to maintain your poor
" petitioner and three children when he
" had no other wife; ſo that if your pe-
" titioner had not been turned out of the
" houſe, ſhe and her young children had
" no other proſpect but that of beggary
" and ſtarving, which ſtill your petitioner
" (by the grace of God) had rather ſubmit
" to, than to turn thief or proſtitute to
" ſupply her wants, which the ſecond wife
" of the ſaid John Williams has done.
" Your petitioner therefore humbly hopes
" that all good Chriſtians will pity her de-
" plorable ſituation, and that of her poor
" deſtitute infants, and your petitioner will
" as in duty bound ſincerely pray.

MARY WILLIAMS,
her + mark.

Now is this caſe at all unlikely to happen upon the introduction of Polygamy? Nay, is there not all the reaſon in the world to ſuppoſe, that if not exactly the ſame, yet ſimilar caſes of wretchedneſs muſt abound in every corner of the land? And ſurely, whatever is the cauſe of this abject diſtreſs, muſt be the means of expoſing women and children to too much greater hardſhips and miſeries than the beaſts of the field are ſubject to.

ALTHOUGH I have the honor of ſtanding in a two-fold capacity among thoſe to whom your *Treatiſe* is dedicated, viz. as a governor of the Lock Hoſpital, and as a member of the Legiſlature; yet you will readily ſuppoſe from the foregoing pages, that I think it abſolutely incumbent upon me in each of thoſe capacities to expreſs my intire diſapprobation of that *Treatiſe*; *Firſt*, as being totally repugnant to the ſcriptures of truth. *Secondly*, as being pregnant with the moſt pernicious conſequences towards the ſtate, and calculated (however unintentionally by you)

you) to multiply all that train of evils which it would ſpeciouſly appear to redreſs or prevent. I aſſure you, dear Sir, not from hearſay evidence, but from certain knowledge, that the altercations, diſſentions, and prejudices againſt religion, which Polygamy in embryo has occaſioned at a conſiderable diſtance from the capital, not only in two counties which are contiguous to me, but in that moſt reſpectable and moſt indulgent county which I have the honor to repreſent, have run ſo high, that I ſhould dread its introduction by law worſe than if any member were to move for leave to bring in a bill for the eſtabliſhment of the plague. And though I hope the real ſenſe I have of the deficiency of my own abilities, will ever prevent me from giving the houſe much trouble by my loquacity, and though upon moſt occaſions, I ſhall probably content myſelf with giving an honeſt independent *aye* or *no*, yet if your ſyſtem were ever to become the object of the legiſlature (of which however I ſee not the leaſt proſpect), I am perſuaded I ſhould not be able

to

to contain myſelf, but ſhould eſteem it my moſt indiſpenſible duty, to bear an open teſtimony againſt it in the ſenate, as well as from the preſs.

Though it be a matter of too much notoriety, that the author of *Thelyphthora* is a reigning toaſt among the jovial ſons of pleaſure at their clubs and taverns, yet I ſhould not have mentioned this circumſtance, but as it tends to demonſtrate the character and ſtamp of thoſe who wiſh well to Polygamy, by the eſtabliſhment of which alone, the huſband who is fond of variety, or the young debauchee who is yet unmarried, can hope to get poſſeſſion of the perſons of thoſe women who otherwiſe would not conſent to their ſolicitations, and this not merely without feeling their conſciences checked for the ſin they might otherwiſe think themſelves guilty of, but all the while congratulating themſelves, that they are diſcharging their duty as faithful ſervants of God, and good members of the community. Thus Polygamy is made the *dernier reſort* of (otherwiſe deſpairing) lewdneſs, and

even covers the vileſt debauchery, under the ſanctimonious *doublet* of obedience to the divine law, and utility towards the ſtate; whilſt thoſe who diſavow the principles and practice of Polygamy, are held forth as laboring under the diſeaſe of a ſcrupulous conſcience, and as being faſt bound with the ſhackles of ignorance, ſuperſtition, and prieſtcraft.

It is now time that I ſhould put an end to this painful epiſtle, which though circumſcribed within a much narrower compaſs, will I believe be found to contain a reply to every material argument you have made uſe of, at leaſt ſo far as the doctrine of Polygamy is concerned.

It may indeed be objected, that an anſwer to two octavo volumes, cannot poſſibly be confined to the limits of a book not much larger than a pamphlet, but I am under the neceſſity of remarking that your whole Treatiſe would not greatly have exceeded the bulk of my letter, had it been freed from its multiplied repetitions, and had

had you omitted pages without number, which anſwer no other end than to bias the reader in your favor, but which in truth and reality, have juſt the ſame force in whatever cauſe they are brought to ſupport. I mean your cenſure of thoſe who obſcure or adulterate the pure word of God by ſuch comments of their own deviſing, as *error*, *prejudice*, and *ſuperſtition*, may direct, *adopting ſound for ſenſe*, ſetting themſelves up to be *wiſer than God*, walking in the ſteps of *Socinus*, *Mahomet* [H], and *Ce-*

[H] As this falſe prophet was the grand patron of Polygamy, he muſt feel himſelf very aukward at being ſo frequently introduced into the company of Monogamiſts, and would certainly be much more at eaſe among thoſe of his own ſentiments on this head.

The learned Mr. Sale, in his tranſlation of the Koran, p. 204, *note*, mentions that one of the great reproaches caſt on Mahomet by the Jews, "was on account of the great number of his wives. For the "Jews ſaid, *that if he was a true prophet, his care and "attention would be employed about ſomething elſe than "women and the getting of children.*—It may be obſerved (adds Mr. Sale) that it is a maxim of the "Jews that nothing is more repugnant to prophecy "than carnality."

rinthus, and ſetting *Chriſt and Moſes at variance*.

Now it is certain, that a writer uſually makes more converts to his opinion by declamation of this ſort, than by any other method, becauſe it at once raiſes the indignation of the reader againſt ſuch ſophiſticators of God's word, whilſt it baniſhes all ſuſpicion that the perſon who is expreſſing his abhorrence of their practice, is himſelf found to adopt it; yet by theſe means an eaſy way is made for the introduction of an author's ſentiments into the mind which is already ſo ſtrongly prepoſſeſſed in his favor.

Far, very far be it from me, to affirm that you have done any thing of this ſort, in order to deceive or miſlead the ſincere inquirer after truth. I bear you witneſs, that the honeſty and integrity of your heart ſet you quite above the reach of ſuch unfair dealing: but an overweening attachment to a favorite notion, has led you to conclude, that whatever parts of God's word ſeemed

to

to militate againſt that notion, muſt have been hitherto miſunderſtood; and hence I am ſorry to ſay, that you have compelled ſcripture to ſtoop to your ſyſtem, rather than ſuffer your ſyſtem to ſtand or fall by the deciſions of ſcripture.

I know that you have complained heavily of the many letters of remonſtrance which were ſent you, before the publication of your book, to deſire you to ſuppreſs it. I can only ſay, it is pity you did not attend to them; for if it be a received maxim, that *vox populi* is *vox Dei*, how much more *vox amicorum*, how much more yet, *vox Chriſtianorum!*

I find by your preface, that you ſubmitted the peruſal of your manuſcript to ſome *learned and pious friends:* though I dare not lay claim to either of theſe adjectives, yet I do lay claim to a very great ſhare in the ſubſtantive, and therefore beg to aſſure you, that if I had had the honor of being ranked among thoſe friends, ſo far from joining them in their approbation, I ſhould have

have been ready to have done what Mrs. *Ainſworth* is reported to have done by the manuſcript of her huſband's dictionary, juſt as it was ready for the preſs, viz. to have committed it to the flames, for no other reaſon, than becauſe the good laborious man (who by the bye found one wife quite a match for him) had the misfortune to break one of her favorite tea-cups: but my conduct would certainly have proceeded from much better motives than that of revenge, viz. love to my friend, love to God, and zeal for the intereſts of the goſpel.

I would wiſh to convince you; but if I cannot do this, be aſſured nothing is further from my thoughts than to offend you; and therefore if you have found any thing throughout this letter which you may think bears rather too hard upon you, let me intreat you not to look upon it as levelled againſt you, but what I am fully perſuaded are the errors you hold.

With heart-felt grief, I ſee that ſome eminent and faithful miniſters of the goſpel have

have imbibed your ſentiments, and are even earneſt in the propagation of them, whilſt others are ſecretly won over to them, but through fear of domeſtic uneaſineſs, or other motives, do not chooſe openly to avow them.

Theſe things I *do* ſee; but how far the evil will yet ſpread, I cannot ſee. I truſt however, that the firm conviction I have in my own mind, of the great impropriety of your having ſent the *Treatiſe* in queſtion abroad into the world, will plead ſufficient apology for this public addreſs, from one who has always eſteemed it both an honor and happineſs to ſubſcribe himſelf,

Rev. and dear Sir,

Your moſt ſincere
and affectionate friend,
RICHARD HILL.

P. S. Your *Treatiſe* had been publiſhed full half a year before I could perſuade myſelf to read it, which will account for my having been ſo long in ſending out my anſwer to it.

ADVERTISEMENT.

I THINK myſelf in a manner obligated to publiſh the following Letter, in order to convince the reader, that I uſed every method in my power to avoid this controverſy, by trying to prevent my much eſteemed Friend from ſending abroad his *Treatiſe*; which I hope will plead my apology for any repetition or ſameneſs of argument, which may appear both in the letter and in the addreſs.

A

LETTER

TO THE

Rev. MARTIN MADAN.

My very dear friend,

I WAS exceedingly concerned to hear a few days ago, from one who has a ſincere regard for you, that you are going to publiſh a book upon the lawfulneſs of Polygamy. I remember to have often heard you deliver your ſentiments on the ſubject to particular friends, but never could have imagined that you would have ſent them abroad into the world; and now beſeech you to conſider well the tendency of ſuch a ſtep, before you advance any further. Even

ſuppoſe all, and more than all you could wiſh to have effected by the publication; ſuppoſe you ſhould convince thouſands that they might, without ſin, have more wives than one; what end will this anſwer? What good will it do you? What glory will it bring to God? What advantage will it be of to ſociety? To ſay the leaſt, it will take up a great deal of your time, which might certainly be much better ſpent. It can render no ſervice to the cauſe of chriſtianity, unleſs you can alſo prove that every additional wife will bring with her an additional ſtock of grace. And with regard to ſociety, it is likely to bring with it an innumerable train of evils; and the more, as all the paſſions, luſts and corruptions of human nature, will be ſo ſtrongly inclined to favor your doctrine, that they will unite all their force to proſelyte the judgment; and then who ſhall dare to ſplit the difference between two wives and two hundred? And if this be allowed on the man's ſide, you will not doubt but there are females amongſt us to be found, who will plead for an extenſion

of

of the privilege to their own ſex. I do not ſay this age is worſe than former ones, but I fancy you will agree with me, that it is not much better, and that we do not live in times wherein it is neceſſary to help mankind to a ſanction for taking more wives than one, eſpecially when they are well tired of the firſt.

I ſhould do you the higheſt injuſtice as a man of ſenſe, and as a chriſtian, to ſuppoſe you had not ſome good and uſeful deſign in view by this intended publication: Yet what that deſign may be, I cannot at all conceive: But I evidently diſcern the moſt dreadful and pernicious conſequences, if you ſhould make many or any converts to your opinion; and if you do not make converts, *cui bono ſcribere?* It is all loſt labour and waſte paper. In the church of God, many *may* be ſtaggered and puzzled, many *will* be aſhamed and grieved; and lifeleſs profeſſors will be gazing about at the *Locke* and *Tottenham* for ſome new object of delight, that when they have loſt every other mark

of ſaintſhip, they may at leaſt follow the examples of ſome Old Teſtament ſaints, in having plenty of wives and concubines. And now I am upon this point, I remember that my dear friend's grand argument in ſupport of his doctrine was that when the ſcripture mentions the polygamy of the Patriarchs, they are never cenſured on this account. But does this prove that what they did was no ſpot in their characters, or that it was agreeable to the mind and will of God? This, I think, would be a dangerous poſition, and might be equally urged as a plea for Noah's drunkenneſs, or Lot's drunkenneſs and inceſt together; none of which ſins are particularly reprehended in the perſons of whom they are recorded. I would wave diſputes how far the Jewiſh worthies (though ſaved by faith in the ſame Redeemer) fell ſhort of the privileges of thoſe who live under the clearer light of the goſpel; but certainly you will allow there was a difference between them; the former *ſaw through a glaſs darkly, the times of reformation* were not fully *come:* And as in the

matter of *putting away their wives*, God bore with them, *becauſe of the hardneſs of their hearts*, ſo how far he might do ſo in their taking a plurality of wives, is, perhaps, not for us to determine; but certainly *from the beginning it was not ſo*, Adam had only his Eve, though from her the whole earth was to be peopled.

Till, therefore, it can be proved that Polygamy is allowed by the goſpel of Chriſt, the example of believers under the legal diſpenſation, will not ſufficiently authorize the practice of it; and ſo far from being allowed, it appears to me to be moſt clearly forbidden; for if our bleſſed Lord condemns the repudiating one wife and taking another, except for the cauſe of fornication, it is the ſame thing, as if he had ſaid in expreſs words, that a man ſhould have only one wife at a time. And when St. Paul ſays, "To "avoid fornication, let every man have his "own wife, and every woman her own "huſband," the certain concluſion to be drawn from the injunction is, that every man

who takes any other woman, doth *not* avoid fornication, any more than the woman who takes any other man does. And indeed the whole 7th chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians, is founded on the ſuppoſition (as a matter taken for granted by the whole chriſtian church) that the huſband has or can have but one wife, any more than the wife can have but one huſband. Do, my dear Sir, read and pray over the whole chapter, and ſurely conviction muſt accompany the word.

I muſt further remark, that the alluſion which the Apoſtle draws between the marriage bond and the union which ſubſiſts between Chriſt and his ſpouſe, or his body, the church, would be a very unjuſt one, and would fail in almoſt every inſtance, if believers might have more wives than one at a time; and inſtead of ſaying that "*they two* (the huſband and wife) ſhall be one fleſh," he ought to have left the matter more at large, and ſhould have ſaid, "*they three*, or *they four*, ſhall be one fleſh," which carries

an abſurdity and contradiction in the very mention. Neither could he with any propriety have exhorted "every man to love "his wife even as himſelf," as that would be confining that affection to one alone, which each wife had an equal right to ſhare in; but as he ſpeaks in the ſingular, and not in the plural number, this proves to demonſtration, that a plurality of wives was never thought of, much leſs allowed by this choſen veſſel.

But not to multiply ſcriptures, (though many more might be produced) conſider the judgment and practice of the whole Catholic church from the very beginning. Can any one example be produced of the toleration of Polygamy? On the contrary, have not almoſt all chriſtian nations, our own in particular, puniſhed it with death, as an heinous offence againſt the laws of God, and the welfare of ſociety?

But I will go one ſtep further with regard to the Old Teſtament ſaints; I will even ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe that God allowed them a plurality of wives; ſtill this will not prove the point that Polygamy is lawful to Chriſtians; for the only ſtandard of right and wrong is the command and will of God; and when God wills or commands a thing to be done, then the doing of it ceaſes to be ſinful, though abſtracted from that command, it might be a notorious act of wickedneſs. Thus it was no ſin in Samuel to hew the king of the Amalekites in pieces; though if God had not willed and commanded it, Samuel had been guilty of a very abominable murder. So to marry the brother's wife, was forbidden by the Levitical law, as an inceſtuous commerce; yet when the brother died without iſſue, it was actually enjoined the next brother to marry the widow, and to raiſe up ſeed unto his brother; and if he did not do ſo, he incurred the heavy diſpleaſure of God, as in the caſe of Onan. All I argue from theſe inſtances, is, that God, as ſovereign of all men, has full right to permit or order that at one time, or upon one occaſion, which he has an equal right to forbid at others;

others; and therefore that he might ſuffer that to be done for his own wife purpoſes by Abraham, David, &c. under the Jewiſh œconomy, *that made nothing perfect*, which now he has the ſame right to prohibit to believers under the meridian of the goſpel.

But now ſuppoſe all theſe arguments (and I might produce many more) have no weight with you; ſtill let me return to my former queſtion, What good is your book likely to do? If it be not againſt the expreſs laws of God, I am ſure it is againſt the expreſs laws of the land; and ſubjection to the powers that are, has always been your avowed principle. Why, then, would you deviate from it in the preſent inſtance, when in proportion to your known character as a miniſter of Chriſt, and to your abilities as a lawyer and caſuiſt, your book is likely to create confuſion in the ſtate, as well as in private families? Can you pray for God's bleſſing on your undertaking? Will the completion of it bring you any comfort on your death bed? Who, think you, will be

benefited

benefited by it? Will the community, will individuals be the better for it? Probably the officers of Doctor's Commons may get more grift to their mill by the additional number of divorces it may occaſion; (though by the bye, theſe gentlemen have tolerable reaſon to be ſatisfied in this reſpect) and probably the author of the trials for adultery, will ſoon extend his filthy pages from five volumes to fifty.

But I find I am extending my letter to a tireſome length. Bear with me, my dear friend, and forgive me this wrong; and if you ſtill think I have been deficient in arguments, ſuffer me to ſupply the want of them by intreaties. I beſeech you, therefore, by the mercies of God in Chriſt Jeſus, that you will not ſend out under the ſanction of your very reſpectable name, a book of ſuch a dangerous tendency; and if you have any love for your chriſtian friends, (which of all others, I have no reaſon to doubt) any concern for the glory of God, the peace of his church, your own reputation, and the

good

good of mankind, that you will not publiſh the *Treatiſe* in queſtion: Or, if this be already done, that you will forbid the further ſale of it, and thereby remedy the miſchief as much as poſſible.

But after all, I hope I am combating a man of ſtraw; and that you have no ſuch deſign in view, as I have been informed of; to be aſſured of which, from your own pen, will afford a real ſatisfaction to,

My dear Friend,

Your's moſt ſincerely and affectionately,

RICHARD HILL.

Hawkſtone, Feb. 2, 1780.

A

WORD

TO THE

READER.

IT is poſſible ſome perſons may have the curioſity to examine *The Bleſſings of Polygamy*, who yet give themſelves little or no trouble about *the bleſſings of eternity*. To ſuch I beg leave to put a very intereſting queſtion, and yet, I muſt own, a moſt unfaſhionable, a moſt unpolite, and, in general, a moſt unwelcome queſtion. It is this. Have you ever ſeriouſly thought of death? Nay, ſtartle not, for it is by no means foreign to the purpoſe: So far from it, that every

every word I have been writing, and every word you have been reading, has a view to this one queſtion only. Why have I been proving the abſolute unlawfulneſs of Polygamy? Not to gratify curioſity; not to ſettle a point of no importance; but becauſe I am fully purſuaded that the practice of it is highly offenſive to God, and dangerous to the ſouls of men. For the very ſame reaſon, therefore, that I would write a diſſuaſive from Polygamy, I would write a diſſuaſive from every other ſin; and for the ſame reaſon why I would wiſh to avoid every ſin, I would wiſh to meet death with confidence; and this certainly cannot be done, without I ſeriouſly and frequently bring the hour of death to view. Surely, then, this is ſufficient reaſon for reſuming the queſtion. Have you ever ſeriouſly thought of death? If you have not, I think you will hardly deny that you are wholly unfit to launch into eternity. If you have ſeriouſly thought on death, then remember that as *the ſting of death is ſin*, ſo *the ſtrength of ſin is the law*; 1 Cor. xv. 56. and that before this law

there

there is none righteous, no not one; forasmuch as *all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God*: So that every door of hope by man's own imperfect obedience, being abſolutely ſhut up, there is no other way of recovering the Divine favor, but *through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. iii. 10. 19, 20, &c. &c.

You may try to ſtifle the convictions of your own mind, by the ſoothing opium of pleaſure, or by hiding yourſelf in the wild thickets of infidelity, ſtill conſcience will at times find you out, and tell you, with an unwelcome voice, that though you are the creature of a day, you have nevertheleſs an immortal part within you, which can never never die, and that you muſt very ſoon appear before the aweful tribunal of an holy God, where all the actions of your life, and even the moſt ſecret thoughts of your heart, will be laid open before an aſſembled world.

Let me intreat you ſeriouſly to conſider theſe things. Believe me, I ſhould be ſincerely

cerely grieved to leave no other impreſſion on your mind than a jingle of *Polygamy*, *Bigamy* and *Monogamy*; and therefore that the foregoing Addreſs may anſwer ſome ſalutary end, I hope you will not think I impoſe a hard taſk on you, in requeſting you to return to your chamber, and there *to commune with your own heart*, if it be but for one quarter of an hour; and with a pious ejaculation to *him who ſeeth in ſecret*, beg that you may know the real ſtate of your ſoul, if (like that of the rich preſumptuous fool in the goſpel) it ſhould *this night be required of you*.

FINIS.

THE COBLER's LETTER

TO THE

Author of Thelyphthora,

INTENDED AS A

SUPPLEMENT

TO

Mr. HILL's ADDRESS,

INTITLED,

"*The Bleſſings of Polygamy.*"

A Brother offended is harder to be won than a ſtrong City. PROV. xviii. 19.

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M DCC LXXXI.

[Price ONE SHILLING.]

THE

COBLER'S LETTER

TO THE

AUTHOR of THELYPHTHORA.

LONDON, *May* 5, 1781.

REV. and DEAR SIR,

WHY are you so much displeased? I am sure there is no intentional unkindness towards you, no designed *asperity of expression* or *personal reflection* which might either *hurt you in your own mind*, or *injure your character in the sight of the world*, throughout my late publication intitled "The Blessings of Polygamy." So far from it, whilst you are complaining of my having treated you with *too little* respect, I have been greatly blamed for having

ing treated you with *too much*. I ſtand convicted however by your reproof for having addreſſed you by name; there certainly would have been more delicacy in not having done ſo, as you had not publicly declared yourſelf to be the author of *Thelyphthora:* and when my book was about half printed off, I was aware that you would blame me on that account. But as you always and upon every occaſion acknowledged the production to be your's, and had, in ſeveral publications previous to mine, been addreſſed as the writer of it, without once diſowning it, I really thought that any attempt on my part to ſcreen my friend from public view, would have appeared almoſt as ridiculous as the command of *Sir John Falſtaff* to his page to ſtand cloſe by him that he might eſcape the eyes of the *chief Juſtice*. I am ſure you will give me full credit when I aſſure you that I moſt ſincerely wiſh, *firſt*, that you were *not* the author of *Thelyphthora*; *ſecondly*, that nobody knew that you *were* the author: And if you believe theſe two declarations, you can never think that I took a pleaſure in making you paſs for that author againſt your own inclinations.

Another

Another reaſon occurred to me for addreſſing you by name. I was happy to let all the world know the regard and friendſhip I had for you; and this could not be done, at leaſt not ſo effectually, if I had conſidered you as anonymous.

Again, After what you yourſelf have ſaid of *Thelyphthora*, as being one of the moſt *important* and *intereſting publications that have appeared ſince the Reformation*, and judged to be ſo by *many eminently learned and pious men* [A], and calculated both to *entertain* and *edify* the reader, I muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe that though a modeſt diffidence forbad you to affix your name to it yourſelf, yet that you would rather eſteem it a compliment than an injury to announce to the world the author of ſuch a performance.

Theſe are the chief of my reaſons for having addreſſed you by name; and I hope you will admit them as good ones.

[A] I know not who the author particularly means by theſe *eminently learned and pious men*: but it is very certain that ſome who both for *learning and piety* are exceeded by few, do at this time, form a very different idea of *Thelyphthora*, than what they did on the firſt haſty peruſal of it; and would be ſincerely grieved to have their names made uſe of as abettors of it.

If you will I ſhall be happy; but whether you will or not, I aſk your pardon for having done it.

The next complaint you make againſt me, is, for not having ſubmitted my manuſcript to your peruſal before it went to the preſs.

But what reaſon could you have to expect this, after the friendly letter of remonſtrance which I wrote you ſo many months before? Had I not at leaſt as much cauſe to expect you would have ſhewn me your manuſcript as any other perſon who had the reviſal of it? But you judged that I ſhould have diſcouraged the publication of it; and you judged right. The very ſame concluſion therefore that I ſuppoſe prevented you from letting me ſee your *Treatiſe on female ruin* (as well as your letter to *Richard Hill, Eſq.* at the end of your third volume) prevented me from aſking your opinion on my late piece, *viz.* I took it for granted that you would as heartily diſapprove my *Anſwer*, as I ſhould have diſapproved your *Treatiſe*; and that you would have been for taking out ſo much of my own matter, and for putting in ſo many inſertions of your own, which

I in

I in my turn, ſhould have been for taking out afterwards, that between us both we ſhould have brought the poor *Bleſſings of Polygamy*, into the ſituation of *Æſop*'s man, who had two wives (my friend will excuſe the compariſon) the one of whom plucked out all his black hairs, the other all his grey ones.

A third complaint my friend has againſt me, is, that I treat the doctrine of Polygamy with *facetious raillery*, and *invent caſes* to make it appear *ridiculous*, and that I *ſhock* him with the *peremptorineſs* of my *determinations*.

On which ſide the moſt *peremptory determinations* are to be found let all readers judge. I will be ſilent.

As to the *ridicule* and *facetious raillery* you talk of, I cannot but think them very allowable, if they prove the means of expoſing a practice which in its conſequences muſt be as pernicious to the welfare of ſociety, as deſtructive to the peace of private families. I have often heard my friend ſpeak in the higheſt terms of Mr. *Vincent Allſop*'s book intitled, *Antiſozzo*, which from the beginning to the end conſiſts of the moſt acute raillery againſt *Doctor Sherlock*

on

on account of ſome expreſſions in a piece publiſhed by the *Doctor*, intitled, if I remember right, "The knowledge of Chriſt."

If indeed I had made any of *God's diſpenſations* the ſubjects of raillery, I ſhould think my friend did me no unkindneſs at all in ranking me (indirectly at leaſt) with Lord *Bolingbroke* or *Voltaire*. But I deny that Polygamy ever was of God's *inſtitution*, or any part of *his diſpenſations*.——But, if it were not for a little *facetious raillery*, and a few pleaſant ſtories, what muſt have been the fate of *Thelyphthora?* If, notwithſtanding all the *variety of entertaining matter* with which that *Treatiſe* abounds, any perſon could be ſo ſtupid as to *yawn* and *nod* at the reading it, as the whole court of Charles the Second did at the hearing *Doctor South*'s ſermons; [B] I ſay, what muſt it have been if the author had not by mixing

[B] Old *South* a witty churchman reckon'd,
Was preaching once to *Charles* the ſecond.
But far too ſerious for a court
Which of all preaching made a ſport,
The good and zealous man of God,
Obſerv'd his audience *yawn* and *nod*,
And finding nothing wou'd avail,
Call'd to the Earl of *Lauderdale*,
"My Lord, why 'tis a monſtrous thing,
"You ſnore ſo loud, you'll wake the king."

the

the *utile dulci* delivered it from the *tireſome dryneſs which uſually attends Treatiſe-writing?* Beſides, where ſhall we find a more lively ſally of wit and *facetious raillery* than the author of *Thelyphthora* has entertained us with in comparing *Mr. Hill* to a cobler, becauſe *Mr. Hill* owns he does not underſtand Hebrew? You remember the old proverb, ſays he, *Ne Sutor*, &c. Yes, my friend, I remember it well. And I think you will not ſoon forget it. The whole proverb runs thus. *Ne Sutor ultra crepidam.* In Engliſh, "*Cobler keep to thy Laſt.*" Or more literally "*Let not the Cobler go beyond his Laſt.*" But when applied to the purpoſe of the author of *Thelyphthora*, (I will put on the cap becauſe it fits me) "Let not *Mr. Hill* pretend to be a critic or philologiſt, at leaſt not a Hebrew critic, whilſt he remains totally unacquainted with that language." Why truly if *Mr. Hill* had had the advantage of a ſkilful Hebræn friend at his elbow, or who lived at a few yards diſtance from him, and if he had been willing to have availed himſelf of ſuch advantage, he might not have made that contemptible diminutive figure in the eyes of a learned *Coloſſus* he now does. But

to

to own the truth, *Mr. Hill (feigned as the ſenſe of the deficiency of his own abilities may be)* choſe rather to paſs for a *Cobler* as he is, than to exalt himſelf on ſtilts not his own, or to ſtrut about like *Æſop*'s daw in borrowed plumes, or *Æſop*'s aſs in the lion's ſkin.

I remember well laſt winter when Admiral *Keppel* was ſpeaking in the houſe of Commons, he ſaid he would not from thenceforth call *Sir Hugh Palliſer* by his own name, but by the name of *the Governor of Greenwich Hoſpital*, which he accordingly did in every other ſpeech he made during the different times the buſineſs relative to the *Portſmouth* Court Martial, or any thing elſe which concerned the Navy was debated.—So,—*Si parva liceat componere magnis*, every time I have occaſion to introduce my own inſignificant name, inſtead of *Richard Hill*, I ſhall call myſelf *the Cobler*. And if we conſider into what great and reſpectable company I ſhall introduce myſelf by the appellation, perhaps there may be more pride than humility in my aſſuming it. Nay, I know not whether it may not be at leaſt as honorable as being ſtiled *Governor of Greenwich Hoſpital*. For

Firſt,

Firſt. We *have* had, (far be it from me to ſay we *now* have) coblers at the helm of Government, even at the head of all our public affairs. Theſe I would ſtile *State Coblers*. Such perſons ſet themſelves to patch and mend, and mend and patch again, till they cannot make both *ends* meet at the *Laſt*. By which means they ſuffer the whole nation to go barefoot; and after having cobbled and cobbled, till they have cobbled away all the leather, 'tis well if they don't ſome time or other bring Engliſhmen to wear *wooden ſhoes*. Theſe coblers are happy when they can get the length of any royal foot, and often try to meaſure the feet of the members of the Houſe of Commons.

N. B. This claſs of coblers make much uſe of the *hammer* and *pincers* in their *work*; and though they *lacker* it well when it is finiſhed, yet it will ſeldom bear the day-light. Beſides the *blacking* they uſe is apt to come off, and ſadly ſullies the fingers.

Secondly. We have very exalted Coblers in Divinity. There are plenty of theſe

theſe in our large Collegiate cities, who (like their brethren of the *black apron*,) carry on their trade in *Stalls*, though they prefer cobling on a *Bench* when it is in their power. And whilſt they are in their *Stalls*, you may ſometimes hear them *ſinging amain*, thereby ſhewing that they are either well pleaſed with their work or their wages. However, theſe coblers in general, (for the picture I give of the moſt is by no means intended as a repreſentation of all, but very far from it) do very little buſineſs in their profeſſion, ſcarcely mending a *ſole* from one year's end to another; and what little they do attempt, is with that ſort of leather which is *againſt the grain*, or as I believe ſhoemakers call it *black of the grain*. And multitudes among them if they do but cobble a little now and then on a Sunday, think this ſufficient reaſon for being idle all the reſt of the week.

I might ſhew in ſeveral more inſtances (but let theſe ſuffice) that there are many great men who are coblers in all profeſſions, and that therefore there is no ſhame at all in my being dubbed *a cobler in criticiſm* by the learned author of *Thelyphthora*.

—From

—From henceforth therefore I am—"*the Cobler.*"—But to the point,

I.

You object that the cobler charges you with recommending an *indiscriminate* and *unlimited* practice of Polygamy, and wanting a law to establish it: and then you bring quotations from *Thelyphthora* to prove that I have either misunderstood or misrepresented your meaning. Yet in these very quotations you affirm Polygamy in general to be both *lawful* and *innocent in itself*, in many cases *expedient*, in some *duty*, and only sinful by *abuse* or *excess*. However, let me transcribe your own words.

"That Polygamy is lawful in itself, and "in many cases expedient, in some duty, "none can deny who will yield to the tes- "timony of the scriptures, and plain mat- "ter of fact. But where it is entered "upon with no other view than to pam- "per the appetite, and to indulge a love "of variety, it degenerates into evil, and "seems to be to marriage, what gluttony, "drunkenness and excess of apparel are to "food and raiment—a *sinful*, because a "forbidden abuse of *lawful* and *necessary* "things."

And

And would my friend attempt to prove from hence that he is not a *maintainer* and *recommender* of *indiſcriminate and unlimited Polygamy?* What! when he compares it to our very meat, and drink, and cloathing, without which no man whatever can exiſt? I readily allow that you are ſpeaking againſt the *abuſe* or *exceſs* of theſe things, and not againſt the lawful uſe of them, therefore the drift of your argument muſt be to prove that though a moderate uſe of meat, drink, and apparel be expedient and neceſſary for all men, but gluttony, drunkenneſs, and pride of dreſs are abominable and ſinful, ſo a moderate uſe of Polygamy is *denied to none*, and only becomes ſinful when indulged to exceſs (and who is to define what is meant by an *exceſs of Polygamy*) and in order to pamper the libidinous appetite.—Giving your reaſoning it's full ſcope, this is what it muſt amount to; and the very ſame thing may be ſaid even of the uſe of the marriage bed itſelf. And indeed in the above quotation, as you do in every other part of your performance, (particularly in a note in your third volume, p. 94. which I have only juſt dipped into, though I intend, *if God ſpare my life* to

to labor through it) you put marriage and Polygamy intirely upon the ſame footing [C]. 'Tis in vain my friend offers his qualifying paſſages whilſt theſe are his avowed ſentiments, and whilſt in ſo many other parts of his book he gives as general an indulgence for the practice of Polygamy as the pope himſelf does for whoredom, by licenſing the public ſtews at *Rome*. Had you purſued any regular plan in your *Treatiſe*, and not run from one thing to another in the looſe unconnected manner you have done, it would have been more eaſy to have followed you throughout; but this is certain, that whatever title your different chapters may bear, Polygamy, Polygamy, Polygamy is the great point in view.—Polygamy, Polygamy, Polygamy the conſtant burden of the ſong.

However, let the cobler now put a plain queſtion or two, by which, if you

[C] The note runs as follows.—"The authority on "which this practice (*Polygamy*) being the ſame on "which *marriage itſelf* is prohibited, in ſo many in-"ſtances unknown to the *ſcriptures*, muſt, to be ſure, "be truly reſpectable!"

The author of *Thelyphthora* allows nobody to ſpeak in a way of ſneer and ſarcaſm but himſelf.

will

will anſwer explicitly, your ſentiments may perhaps be better underſtood.

1ſt. Is it lawful in the ſight of God for any man who has a wife (and I will add, children by that wife) to make his propoſals and to take another in her life-time?—Would he commit ſin in ſo doing?

2dly. As you ſtate perverſeneſs of temper in the woman to be a ground for Polygamy, I ſhould be glad to know who is to be the judge of this perverſeneſs of temper? Who is to determine whether it may not be wholly owing to the tyrannical behavior or want of affection in the huſband? Upon this vague notion, every man might become a Polygamiſt where he and his wife had no right to demand the *flitch of bacon*. The idea that a man and his wife are coupled not only *for better for worſe*, but for life alſo, cauſes much mutual forbearance, and prevents many a conjugal diſpute: but whilſt the huſband can think himſelf at liberty to take a *ſecond* or a *third*, whenever *Madam* is not quite ſo pleaſant as ſhe might be, would not this be the means of creating quarrels without number, and threatenings without end; eſpecially when the huſband happened to caſt his eye on any particular

particular object of delight, whom he wiſhed to have the enjoyment of? In ſuch caſe, might he not ſay, "Well, I have no-"thing to do, but to go home and teaze "my wife and put her out of humor, and "then that dear creature may be my own." Vain indeed would be the author of *Thelyphthora*'s ſpecious qualifying ſentences to reſtrain ſuch a man from his purpoſe; eſpecially whilſt the ſame author tells him with the ſame breath, that Polygamy is *a link in the chain of God's diſpenſations*, and is in itſelf both *lawful* and *innocent*.

As to the caſes of *Lunacy*, or of abſolute *Barrenneſs* on the ſide of the woman, I would rather be ſilent on theſe points than diſcuſs them: only, I would briefly obſerve, that if the purport of your book had been to prove that under ſuch circumſtances divorce ought to be obtained from our courts of law, and the man have leave to marry again, I ſhould not have diſturbed you in the quiet poſſeſſion of your opinion; though if we had talked the matter over in private, I ſhould have obſerved that a thing of that ſort ought to be entered upon with great deliberation; ſince the woman who might at one time be diſor-

dered in her ſenſes, might not perhaps always continue ſo; and ſeeing that *children and the fruit of the womb* were pronounced by the mouth of inſpiration to be *a gift and heritage that cometh of the Lord*, therefore ſhe who at one time might be accounted a *barren woman*, might afterwards (even many years afterwards) *keep houſe* and be *a joyful mother of children*. And ſhould this be the caſe, the higheſt injury would be done to the firſt wife, by putting her away and taking another. I might alſo have added that as no trials can befal a good man without the over-ruling hand of God's providence, he ſhould endeavor to exerciſe a ſpirit of faith, patience, reſignation and prayer, whilſt he is under them; and that though we are permitted to uſe means to extricate ourſelves out of them, yet we muſt ſee to it that they are *lawful* means, and ſuch as are warranted by God's holy will and word.

II.

The cobler is cenſured for ſaying that the author of *Thelyphthora* explodes all external marriage ceremony as *ſuperſtitious prieſtcraft*.

My

My reaſons for this ſuppoſition are grounded upon the author's whole chapter of marriage, the ſubſtance and purport of which muſt be well remembered by thoſe who have read his *Treatiſe*, and from which it is clear, that though he acknowledges the expediency of an outward recognition of marriage for the purpoſes of ſociety, yet he lays it down as a certain poſition that neither contract nor external ceremony are at all neceſſary (in a religious view) before the parties come together, and that the ſingle act of bodily union is the only true ſcriptural marriage.

III.

The cobler is told by the author of *Thelyphthora*, that "he meets with no ſuch "caſes as that of Lady *A*— and Sir *Thomas A*—; nor as that of the humble "petition of *Mary*, the wife of *John Williams*—nor of women of the St. *Giles*'s "breed, crying *murders* about the ſtreets, "as the conſequences of the *Jewiſh* ſyſtem."

This is no reaſon at all why they would not be very frequent in *England* if Polygamy were eſtabliſhed among us. But I am

far from believing that Polygamy was ever much in practice among the *Jews*, and even where it was practiſed, I doubt not but the miſchiefs attending it were in many caſes very evident. One thing however is certain, which is, that the cobler has given the author of *Thelyphthora* a *pinching ſhoe* by the introduction of the caſes before-mentioned, and therefore he affects to treat them with contempt. However, in your next piece, (for I underſtand we are to have *more laſt words* of the author of *Thelyphthora*,) I deſire you will give me the ſatisfaction of knowing your ſentiments on thoſe caſes, particularly on that of king *Charles* the ſecond and *Nell Gwyn*, the duchefs of *Portſmouth*, or indeed any other of his miſtreſſes; for upon your plan, I ſee no more harm of his keeping a dozen than one, provided he were the firſt man who *became one fleſh with them*, and provided he perſiſted in taking them to his bed one after another as long as he lived. But more particularly ſtill, I beg you will inform the cobler and the public what you *do* ſay, or *can* ſay, in the caſe propoſed in the *Bleſſings of Polygamy* of a ſingle woman filiating her child before you on a married man. As

a juſtice of the peace, you are obliged to put the law in force againſt him.—As a clergyman, you muſt tell him that he took his own wife in order to cleave *to her alone, forſaking all others.*—But as the author of *Thelyphthora*, I am quite at a loſs to know how you would addreſs the parties; eſpecially if the man informed you that his own wife were *barren* or *ill-tempered.*

I hope alſo you will not forget to tell us your authority for ſaying that *Luther* and the other Proteſtant divines *unanimouſly declared* in the caſe of the *Landgrave* of *Heſſe*, that it was *not contrary to the law of God* for a man to take another wife his firſt being alive [D].

IV.

The author of *Thelyphthora* ſays a man might *maliciouſly wound* either of theſe (a

[D] How the author of *Thelyphthora* can poſſibly think of preſſing the Reformers, whether at home or abroad, into his ſervice, is to me moſt inconceivable, eſpecially after the quotation I brought from *Luther* againſt the Polygamy of the Anabaptiſts; and when *Beza* wrote an expreſs treatiſe againſt Polygamy, which is noticed by *Calvin* with the higheſt approbation. As to the ſentiments of our *Engliſh* Reformers, they may be pretty well known by the marriage ſervice, and the homily againſt adultery.

wife or a virgin) and not be liable to death, as he would be in the caſe of *maliciouſly wounding* cattle.

Here the cobling country juſtice, muſt again take the liberty of reminding his friend *learned in the law*, that he is under a very great miſtake in this aſſertion, for by the act commonly called the *Coventry act* (made on account of the maiming Sir *John Coventry*, in the reign of *Charles* the ſecond) *maliciouſly maiming* or *wounding* any ſubject is made *death*.

The caſes of a rape and of a man having intercourſe with a woman by her own free conſent, or even ſeducing [*D*] her, are very different. In the former, the oath of the woman alone may ſafely be taken, as ſhe can have no intereſt in ſwearing againſt the man; in the latter, a door would neceſſarily be opened to a thouſand frauds and impoſitions. Therefore, though I agree with you intirely, that every unmarried man who ſeduces or debauches a virgin ought to make her his wife; yet I alſo ſay, that

[*D*] *Query.* Upon the principles of *Thelyphthora*, whether ſuch a thing as *ſeduction* (any more than fornication) can or ever did exiſt, ſince the firſt intercourſe of man with a woman is by him deemed a marriage?

that compulſion upon every accuſation of that ſort, by the woman's teſtimony only, (and no other can hardly ever be had) would be attended with very dreadful conſequences. However, where ſuch a law could be inforced, it ought to be inforced. And if this were all you had endeavored to prove, your deſign would certainly have met with general approbation; though inſtead of three *heavy* volumes, you might have comprized the whole of what you had to ſay within the compaſs of three pages, and thereby have ſaved yourſelf much time and trouble, have ſaved your readers the ſum of fifteen ſhillings each, and have ſaved the cobler and the monthly and critical reviewers a very tireſome piece of employment.

V.

You aſk me how far from "*implying* "*approbation* it is where an action is *per-* "*mitted?*"—I anſwer, it is often very far. Will my friend ſay, that becauſe God *permitted David*'s adultery and murder, he therefore *approved* of them? Take heed leſt by loſing ſight of this material diſtinction, you make God the author of all ſin.

Beſides,

Beſides, give this ſentiment its full ſcope, that God's *permiſſion* and his *approbation* cannot be ſeparated, and it will go near to make the moſt abominable wickedneſs the ſure road to heaven.

VI.

I am preſſed with the authority of *Wetſtein*, Biſhop *Burnet* and others, Doctor *Doddridge* himſelf bringing up the rear.

Now what ſhould you think of the cobler, if he were to treat them all with the moſt ſupercilious diſdain, and were to ſay, "What are all human authorities to me, "if they ſpeak not agreeable to the divine "law and teſtimony? I no more mind "them, than I mind the *wiſdom of Plato*, "*Ariſtotle*, *Cicero*, &c. *among the antients*; "*or of* Sir *Iſaac Newton*, Mr. *Lock*, Biſhop "*Warburton*, *or the old woman that ſells ap-*"*ples at the corner of the ſtreet among the mo-*"*derns* [E]." Suppoſe again I were to preſs you with the authority of your favorite *Wetſtein*, in order to degrade the divinity of the Son of God [F]. Would you call that authority

[E] *Thel.* vol. ii. concluſion.

[F] This laborious commentator (who was a *Swiſs*, and was obliged to leave his own country on account of

authority concluſive? I am perſuaded you would not compliment this learned man at the expence of *denying the Lord that bought you.* Suppoſe I were to produce the expreſs teſtimony of a thouſand learned and pious authors and commentators againſt Polygamy? What would be your reply? *They have followed one another like ſheep.*—*They ſpeak not agreeable to the divine law.*—*They ſet Moſes and Chriſt at variance.*—But if only a ſingle word or ſentence can be gathered from any of them that at all favors our author's ſyſtem; then no praiſes can be too laviſh on their excellent judgment, prodigious piety, or profound learning. O *Thelyphthora*, *Thelyphthora*, thou mother of inconſiſtency, where ſhall I find thee?

Quo tenear vultus mutantem Protea nodo?

But it is no ſtrange thing to hear men exclaim loudly againſt human authority, while they are aſſuming to themſelves an

of his Arian principles,) has given us the various readings of the New Teſtament; but among them all, the word αλλοτριαν for αλλην is not to be found; therefore this change of the word is intirely on his own judgment; but as it happens to coincide with the plan of our author, he adopts it with as much authority as if it were really part of the ſacred text.

authority

authority little leſs than divine, and at the ſame time that they are profeſſing to hold the opinions and deciſions of all other men in the utmoſt contempt, are expecting that all other men ſhould pay the moſt implicit obedience to their own.

It is alſo a practice more common than decent, for an author to talk of the abſurdity of the pope's pretenſions to infallibility, and at the very inſtant that he is doing ſo, to be putting on the *triple crown*, and thruſting his own *ipſe dixit* into the papal chair. Hence it is that the moſt peremptory *dictators* are uſually thoſe who ſpeak moſt againſt *dictating:* and whilſt they will ſuffer no human authority, however reſpectable, to be quoted againſt them, where it does not coincide with their own ſentiments, will yet catch at every thread of teſtimony they can lay hold on when it makes at all for their ſide the queſtion.— How is it poſſible to argue on *fair* ground with ſuch *unfair* players at *bo-peep?* — Produce a cloud of commentators; they are all deſpiſed as human authority: produce none, and you are deſpiſed yourſelf for not producing them.

With

With regard however to Biſhop *Burnet*, I think I can give a tolerable good reaſon for his writing his little tract concerning Polygamy, though what he did was certainly a great blot in his character, if it were only on account of his duplicity.

When the friends of the Proteſtant intereſt ſaw that *Charles* the ſecond was not likely to have any iſſue by the infanta of *Portugal*, to whom he was married, and that therefore the crown was likely to deſcend to a popiſh ſucceſſor, they began to put every engine at work that the King might have an heir, as *Burnet* himſelf tells us in *the hiſtory of his own time*, vol. i. p. 261. *fol. edit.* from whence I tranſcribe *verbatim* what follows:

" When the party ſaw they could make " nothing of the buſineſs of the Duke of " Monmouth, they tried next by what " methods they could get rid of the " Queen; that ſo the King might marry " another wife: For the King had chil- " dren by ſo many different creatures, that " they hoped for iſſue, if he had a wife " capable of any. Some thought, the " Queen and he were not legally married: " But the avowing a marriage, and the " living

" living many years in that ſtate, did cer-
" tainly ſupply any defect in point of
" form. Others pretended, ſhe was bar-
" ren from a natural cauſe, and that
" ſeemed equivalent to impotence in men.
" But the King often ſaid, he was ſure ſhe
" had once miſcarried. This though not
" overthrown by ſuch an evidence, could
" never be proved, unleſs the having no
" children was to be concluded a barren-
" neſs: And the diſſolving a marriage on
" ſuch an account could neither be juſti-
" fied in law nor conſcience. Other ſto-
" ries were given out of the Queen's per-
" ſon, which were falſe: For I ſaw in a
" letter under the King's own hand that
" the marriage was conſummated. *Others*
" *talked of Polygamy:* And officious per-
" ſons were ready to thruſt themſelves into
" any thing that could contribute to their
" advancement. Lord *Lauderdale* and
" Sir *Robert Murray* aſked my opinion of
" theſe things. I ſaid, I knew ſpeculative
" people could ſay a great deal in the way
" of argument for *Polygamy*, and divorce:
" Yet theſe things were ſo decried, that,
" they were *rejected by all Chriſtian ſo-*
" *cieties.*"

How

How few men, even good men are there who can totally withſtand corrupt influence and court favor! How eaſy is it to find arguments when we have a ſecret intereſt in wiſhing a thing to be true! Notwithſtanding *Burnet* had pronounced Polygamy to be *rejected by all Chriſtian Societies*, yet he afterwards himſelf ſtated the caſe which you have produced, and certainly gave his anſwer rather in favor of it; ſtill however with great caution, and not without being conſtrained to own it as a *truth*, "that Polygamy falls ſhort of the "intendment of marriage in innocency, to "which ſtate, we that are under the goſ-"pel muſt return as near as it is poſſible."

Upon the whole, Biſhop *Burnet*'s teſtimony amounts to little more than a queſtion in caſuiſtry [G], which he endeavors to ſolve in the moſt favorable manner he could to the prevailing court party; but after all does not pretend to ſpeak deciſively on the ſubject; and though it appears from the tract itſelf, which I have

[G] The queſtion is this: Whether in *any caſe* Polygamy be *lawful* under the goſpel?

How very different from the peremptory and abſolute aſſertion of the author of *Thelyphthora*, that "*Po-*"*lygamy is lawful in itſelf.*"

ſeen

ſeen in the Britiſh *Muſeum* that he ſhewed it to Lord *Lauderdale*, who was then high in the King's favor, yet there is no proof at all that the Biſhop made it public himſelf, or that it was ever printed by his own approbation.

But who could have expected that good *Doctor Doddridge* ſhould ever have been called upon as a Coadjutor to Polygamy, in his note on 1 *Tim.* iii. 2. where he firſt gives the ſentiments of Mr. *Hallet* and Mr. *Whiſton* on the text, and then mentions his own, by which he is ſo far from approving Polygamy, that he calls it an *irregular practice*, to which the *divine wiſdom* had *fixed a brand of infamy*. However, if we have a mind to know exactly what was this excellent man's opinion of Polygamy, we have only to conſult his paraphraſe on 1 Cor. vii. &c. where he has the following remarkable words:

" As the God of nature has for certain " wiſe reaſons implanted in the ſexes a " mutual inclination to each other, in or- " der to prevent Fornication, and every " other ſpecies of uncleanneſs, *let every* " *man have* and retain his own proper " wife; and *let every woman have* and re-

" tain

" tain her own huſband: for neither di-
" vorce nor Polygamy, are by any means
" agreeable to the genius of the goſpel.

" Again, The wife hath not power over
" her own body, but hath by the marriage
" covenant transferred it to the huſband;
" and in like manner alſo *the huſband hath*
" *not power over his own body*, but it is as
" it were THE PROPERTY OF HIS
" WIFE.

In the *improvement* of this chapter *Doctor Doddridge* makes the following judicious obſervation:

" It becomes us humbly to adore the
" divine wiſdom and goodneſs manifeſted
" in the formation of the firſt human
" pair, and in keeping up the different
" ſexes through all ſucceeding ages, in ſo
" juſt a proportion, that *every man might*
" *have his own wife, and every woman her*
" *own huſband.*

Methinks after theſe concluſive teſtimonies from *Doctor Doddridge*, my friend's attempt to prove him an abettor of Polygamy is ſomething like that of the Iriſhman who ſaid " he was ſure there was a dead man in the ditch, for he heard him groan."

Had the author of *Thelyphthora* been ſatified with the deciſion of this ſound and learned proteſtant Divine on the text, we ſhould not have found him ſtooping ſo very low as to aſk inſtruction from the pope, or rather from a neſt of Jeſuits, by adopting the ſenſe of the *Rhemiſh* teſtament on the paſſage before us, and then by way of mending the matter adding

—— *Fas eſt et ab hoſte doceri.*

When he might with much more propriety have exclaimed

Flectere ſi nequeo ſuperos acheronta movebo.

But the cobler cannot take leave of this important ſcripture without once more commencing critic; and as he is threatened with a future drubbing for his ignorance and blunders in the explanation of this chapter, he will e'en try his hand once more; that if the author of *Thelyphthora* has any more diſcipline to beſtow upon him, he may give it him all at once.

Upon reviſing what I ſaid in the *Bleſſings of Polygamy*, p. 61, 62, 63. I find I have omitted to take notice of a very glaring piece of partiality, which my friend has

has fallen into in his tranſlation of that ſame word ἐχέτω which has already occaſioned ſo much altercation: for in the very ſame verſe where it relates to the man, he renders it, Let him *retain* his wife. But where it relates to the woman he renders it, Let her *keep to* her huſband. His reaſon for making this wide difference of ſenſe in the very ſame word, and in the very ſame verſe is very evident. But though neither of the expreſſions are ſo juſt as that which our tranſlators have given us, yet I will readily leave it to your choice to take the word *retain* or *keep to* which ever you pleaſe. If you chooſe the firſt, and tranſlate the one part of the verſe, *Let the huſband* retain *his wife*, then you muſt tranſlate the other part, *Let the wife* retain *her huſband*: And there's an end of Polygamy that way.

But if you had rather take the other expreſſion, *Let the wife* keep to *her huſband*, then you muſt alſo (as obſerved in *the Bleſſings of Polygamy*) render the latter clauſe *Let the huſband* keep to *his wife*. In ſhort chooſe which expreſſion you will, only abide by it; but without the moſt ſhameful abuſe of the word of God, you

cannot give a different ſenſe to the repetition of the ſame word in the ſame verſe.

But as my learned friend by his elucidation of this chapter leaves the matter open to the whole church of Corinth to practice Polygamy without any *limitation* or *reſtriction* whatever, we may ſuppoſe in order to make him conſiſtent with himſelf, that he has found out by ſome antient manuſcript or tradition, that all the married women whoſe huſbands were members of that church were either *barren*, or *lunatics*, or *ſcolds*.

The cobler has nothing more to ſay in the way of criticiſm himſelf, but begs to apply to the learned author of *Thelyphthora* for information whether the text in *Mal.* ii. which our tranſlators have rendered in the ſingular number "*thee and* the wife *of thy youth*," be really ſo in the original; or whether the words ſtand in the Hebrew as given us in *Thelyphthora*, *You and your* WIVES? I am ſure if our tranſlators have rendered the words in the ſingular number, when they ought to have been in the plural, they have ſhewn themſelves to be very incorrect, though they have thereby made the text ſpeak ſtrongly in favor of monogamy:

gamy: but if your tranſlation be the true one, then I confeſs there is an ambiguity in the phraſeology; and that though *thee and thy wife* can mean only two perſons or *they twain*, yet *you and your wives* leaves the matter ſo much at large, that it may take in one man with half a dozen wives. Your explicit anſwer to this queſtion will really much oblige me, as I aſſure you I have aſked no perſon but yourſelf, whether you or the tranſlators of the Bible are right.

VII.

The author of *Thelyphthora* totally miſrepreſents what the cobler called "*low chicanery.*" The expreſſion alluded to was the following: "That if by a woman in the text (Matt. v. 28.) *any woman* be meant, then a man may commit adultery *by looking at his own wife.*" This you have intirely paſſed over, and inſtead of it you affirm that I charge you with *chicanery*, for ſaying that the word adultery is never uſed but where the defilement of a married woman is concerned [F].

VIII.

[F] If this aſſertion contain ſound divinity, then fornication as well as adultery is not forbidden by

VIII.

The author deſires me to aſk myſelf if I did not read his book with prejudice. "Did not your prejudices (ſays he) incline you to wiſh that they might rather be juſtified than removed?"—I anſwer ſincerely, that notwithſtanding the ſtrong prepoſſeſſions I had in favor of the author, yet I *had* imbibed very ſtrong prejudices againſt his performance before I read it. Theſe prejudices I attribute in great meaſure to ſome letters I had read, which were written by one *Paul* of *Tarſus* on the other ſide of the queſtion, and when I came to read your book, I really thought he was more than a match for you.

IX.

Though it ſeemed by our author's ſentiments as contained in the two firſt volumes of *Thelyphthora*, that no ſuch thing as fornication could exiſt, yet he now tells us there is ſuch an animal in the world as a whore, and gives us a moſt wonderful

the ſeventh commandment, and if not by that commandment, then by no other, and conſequently can be no ſin; for *where no law is, there is no tranſgreſſion.*

account

account of this creature in the following words:

" If this woman" (who has intercourſe with one man and is therefore according to our author, the wife of that man by the divine law) " departs from this *firſt* man " to another, the bond with the firſt is " totally vacated by her act of adultery; ſo " that the firſt man is totally releaſed from " her. If afterwards ſhe goes from man " to man, and ſells or gives her favors pro- " miſcuouſly to all alike, ſhe is every " bodys: no man can lay claim to her, " or look upon her as his *property*, or be " injured as a given appropriated huſband " might be, by her infidelity. She is in " ſhort, *nullius inter bona*, and is an whore, " harlot or proſtitute, in the true ſenſe of " theſe words."

From this very extraordinary definition it appears,

1ſt. That no unmarried woman (i. e. according to our author's ideas of marriage) can be a whore.

2dly. That no woman whatever can commit whoredom till ſhe has firſt committed adultery.

3dly. That ſhe can be guilty of no whoredom till *three* men have had connection with her.

4thly. That as fornication is a leſs ſin than adultery, conſequently the third man who has intercourſe with her is leſs guilty than the ſecond.

5thly. That from the moment ſhe has beſtowed her favors on the third man, ſhe ceaſes to be an adultreſs.

6thly. That if an action be brought by the huſband for *crim. con.* with any man but the ſecond, it muſt be laid for committing *whoredom* with his wife, and not for committing *adultery*.

That theſe are concluſions neceſſarily deducible from our author's definition and premiſes is clear at firſt view: but without animadverting upon them, let me aſk how agrees this doctrine with ſcripture? There we find, *Deut.* xxii. 13, 14, &c. &c. that if ſuſpicion aroſe in the huſband concerning his new married wife that ſhe was not a maid, and if the *tokens of her virginity* could not be produced, ſhe was adjudged to have *played the whore*. So by the Levitical law, *Lev.* xxi. 7. no prieſt was to *take a wife that was a whore*. By which

which it is evident that according to God's judgment, though not according to the judgment of the author of *Thelyphthora*, a woman might be a whore firſt and a wife afterwards. With him it is juſt *vice verſa*.

Truly, my friend, you are very kind to propoſe to me the leaving off *tea*, that my ideas may not be *diſordered* by *frightful dreams*; but ſuch ſeems to be the confuſion of your own ideas, that I would adviſe you to take an additional quantity of *coffee*, which I have heard is ſometimes effectual towards diſſipating the fumes of the imagination: Well indeed may you tell me that you are "perfectly convinced that I have ſcarcely one real idea of the book I write againſt," when the writer himſelf has ſcarcely one fixed idea of the ſubject he handles. And this perhaps is the true cauſe why you complain that your book is ſo generally miſunderſtood.

X.

The author of *Thelyphthora* ſeems to lay a great ſtreſs on the law of marrying the brother's wife: and where the ſurviving brother had no wife nor children of his own, there it was God's poſitive command that

that he ſhould do ſo: but I no more believe that he ordained this as a general law where the next brother was already married, than I believe he commanded the widow and the wife to be married together. *Joſephus*'s teſtimony muſt in this caſe be concluſive, and the quotation which you yourſelf bring from him, *Antiq. lib.* ix. *chap.* 5. is full againſt you, for there he aſſerts that *Mahlon*'s kinſman refuſed to marry *Ruth*, ſaying, "*he had already a wife and children.*"——But our author adds, "*not a word that it was unlawful.*" But does not the very anſwer he returned imply this?—However, the author eaſily gets over the matter in his uſual way, by affirming on the greateſt of all authorities, *viz.* his own, that *Joſephus does not repreſent the matter as the Bible does.* Thel. vol. 1. p. 253. However, if the author would eſtabliſh his point, let him produce only one example of the next brother marrying the widow of the deceaſed brother, when he himſelf was a married man.—But I will go farther ſtill.—Even ſuppoſing that in this particular inſtance God himſelf had commanded that the brother of the deceaſed, though a married man, ſhould yet eſpouſe

eſpouſe the widow; ſtill this would be no more proof that God approved of general Polygamy, than it would be that he approved of general inceſt, which marrying a brother's wife was deemed to be, and was forbidden as ſuch under the Levitical law.

XI.

You are pleaſed to ſay you feel both hurt and aſhamed at my ſtrictures on the ſtory of *Judah* and *Tamar*. Certainly the cobler ought to be much obliged to you for this great ſenſibility on his behalf; but as he has taken the very words of the ſacred text, and he thinks alſo the ſenſe of it, he hopes you will make yourſelf quite eaſy on his account; eſpecially as he does not find that any other perſon beſides the author of *Thelyphthora* thinks he has given any wrong interpretation of the paſſage; not to mention that this author has expreſſed himſelf in ſuch a manner on the place in queſtion that few, if any, of his readers have been able to underſtand him.

XII.

I leave it to you and Doctor *Kennicot* to ſettle the matter about the word *not*.

XIII.

XIII.

That *Jael* acted as a faithful ſubject of the *Iſraelitiſh* ſtate, I don't deny: but that ſhe alſo *acted under the immediate direction of God*, is as clear as that the ſun ſhines at noon-day. Read the fourth and fifth chapters of *Judges* throughout, alſo *Pſalm* lxxxiii. 9. where the act of *Jael* to *Siſera* is ſpoken of as the direct act of God. It is true, this matter does not affect the preſent controverſy either one way or other, but it is grievous to ſee the divine teſtimony ſo little regarded by one who certainly ought to have more reſpect for it.

XIV.

The cobler is challenged to find as ſtrong a prohibition of Polygamy, on the man's ſide, as that *Rom.* vii. 1, 2, 3. on the woman's ſide.

To bring that paſſage is meer trifling. It is plain that the apoſtle is there introducing the law as a huſband, to whom we are all eſpouſed by nature; and Chriſt as a huſband, to whom all believers are eſpouſed by grace: therefore the grand and only point he meant to prove was, that a believer had no more to do with an abrogated

gated law as a covenant of works, than a widow who was married again has to do with her firſt huſband when he is dead and buried If therefore St. *Paul* had in this place ſhewn that it was equally criminal in a man to have more wives than one, as it was in a woman to have more huſbands than one (though the one were as much a truth as the other,) it would have been quite foreign to his own purpoſe. But when our bleſſed Saviour is confining himſelf wholly to the matters of adultery and divorce, there he expreſſly gives us to underſtand that it is equally criminal in the man to put away his wife and marry another, as it is in the wife to put away her huſband and marry another. *He ſaith unto them, Whoever ſhall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery againſt her: and if a woman ſhall put away her huſband, and be married to another, ſhe committeth adultery*, Mark x. 11, 12.

XV.

The author of *Thelyphthora* again *challenges* the cobler in a very peremptory manner, to produce one inſtance of the divine *prohibition* or *diſapprobation* of Polygamy. And then

then tells us, (perhaps rather too much in a way of triumph) that if I do ſo, *I ſhall have the Old Teſtament on my ſide.*

The cobler anſwers the challenge; *firſt*, by producing that remarkable text, *Deut.* xvii. 17. where God tells the *Iſraelites*, that when they were come into the land which he ſhould give them, the king which he would chooſe for them *ſhould not multiply wives unto himſelf, that his heart turn not away.*—Here is,

1ſt, Abſolute *prohibition*; *he ſhall not multiply wives* or have *many wives*, which is the expreſs meaning of the word Polygamy.

2dly, *Diſapprobation*, and the reaſon of it, leſt Polygamy, or the *multiplying wives*, ſhould *turn away his heart from God.*

But that the interpretation of this important text of ſcripture may not reſt on my own deciſion, I ſhall back it with a teſtimony, which, to an unprejudiced mind, muſt carry with it full conviction: and this ſhall be from a comment on the Bible, which was ſet forth (as ordered by the committee for religion) by a conſiderable number of thoſe ſound, learned, and evangelical divines which compoſed the Weſtminſter Aſſembly, and before publication ſubmitted

ſubmitted to the peruſal and correction of them all together, as is expreſſed in the preface to the work itſelf; and therefore muſt be regarded not as the judgment of a ſingle individual, or of one commentator, but as conveying the ſenſe of a large body of the greateſt, ableſt, and beſt men that perhaps ever compoſed any ſynod ſince the days of the apoſtles.

Theſe faithful and orthodox divines thus expreſs themſelves on the text in queſtion:

" If kings may not [*i. e. multiply wives*] " much leſs their ſubjects, ſince it is of " more moment that they have children " than inferior perſons; and though the " patriarchs had more wives than one at " once, it was not according to the firſt " inſtitution of marriage. [*See annot. on* " *Gen.* iv. 19.] It was never allowed by " God, though for a time *tolerated*, upon " reaſons which concern not our times. " And this might be rather *forbidden* to a " king, becauſe of the power of his ex- " ample upon the manners of his people."

Suffer me to bring one more text of ſcripture, which though quoted in the *Bleſſings of Polygamy*, is not of leſs weight on that account.—The paſſage alluded to,

is

is that *Lev.* xviii. 18. *Neither ſhalt thou take a wife to her ſiſter*, (or as it ſtands in the margin, *one wife to another) to vex her, to uncover her nakedneſs, beſide the other in her life time.*

I know you will not allow the marginal reading to be the true ſenſe of the words, and may perhaps tell me, as you do upon another occaſion, that "*I have not called in a ſingle commentator, hiſtorian, or other author to my aid.*" However, I will now *call in* the corroborating teſtimony of one of the moſt judicious and unexceptionable men that ever lived in my behalf. Good old Mr. *Perkins*, who certainly ſhone among the brighteſt ſtars which adorned the church of *England* during the reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, and who for piety, learning, and deep ſkill in caſuiſtry, was equalled by few, exceeded by none. This able and ſound divine, treating on the text in queſtion, thus writes,

" This place is a flat prohibition of *the* " *ſin of Polygamy:* for to take a wife to " her ſiſter, in the *Hebrew* phraſe, is no- " thing elſe but to take two wives one to " another. The like form of ſpeech is uſed " otherwhere by *Moſes*, as *Exod.* xxvi. 3.

" Five

" Five curtains ſhall be coupled together " (the woman to her ſiſter,) that is, one " to another; and the other five curtains " ſhall be coupled (the woman to her ſiſ- " ter) that is, the one to the other. *Ezek.* " i. 9. The four beaſts were joined with " their wings (the woman to her ſiſter,) " that is, the one to the other. Again, " *Moſes* himſelf there alledgeth two reaſons " againſt Polygamy: the one is, becauſe " the man is to love, cheriſh, and com- " fort his wife; whereas, if he ſhould take " unto him another beſides her, he ſhould " greatly *vex* his firſt lawful wife. The " other, becauſe by that means he ſhould " uncover the ſhame of his wife; that is, " he ſhould play a very diſhoneſt part with " her, to whom he was before lawfully " married." *Perkins on Chriſtian Oeconomy or Houſhold Government*, vol. iii. p. 677.

The very ſame interpretation which Mr. *Perkins* gives, do the Aſſembly of Divines alſo give of this ſcripture in their comment before quoted. The following are their own words. " This is not to be under- " ſtood only of another natural ſiſter, as " if a man might have two wives, ſo they " were not ſuch ſiſters, or two ſiſters one

" after

" after another to wife, the latter upon " the death of the former, for the mar- " riage of the brother's wife is forbidden " before, *ver.* 16. and by conſequence a " woman muſt not marry her ſiſter's huſ- " band, and ſo two ſiſters are already for- " bidden to be married to one man.— " Wherefore it is moſt probable, that this " is a prohibition of Polygamy, *i. e.* of " having more wives than one at once; " that one may not be a vexation to the " other, which is likely to fall out not " only betwixt natural ſiſters, as *Leah* and " *Rachel*, but betwixt thoſe that are not " of kin, as betwixt *Hannah* and *Penin-* " *nah*. And for the word *ſiſter* in a ge- " neral acceptation, it may be applied to " *any woman*, as the word *brother* to *any* " *man*. Gen. xix. 7. And it is to be noted, " that it is ſometimes to be applied to " things, which, in propriety of ſpeech, " come not under ſuch a title or denomi- " nation, as the wings of the beaſt, *Ezek.* " i. 9. are ſaid to touch *a woman to her* " *ſiſter*, as the Hebrew phraſe carrieth it."

Now what ſays my friend to theſe autho- rities? I dare ſay he will not ſcruple to af- firm that they are not worth minding. But

what if Mr. *Perkins* and the Aſſembly of Divines had ſpoken the language of *Thelyphthora?* Then what high encomiums would they have received! Truly, we may ſee that throughout life, *the traveller who blowed hot and cold with the ſame mouth*, is no uncommon character.

XVI.

The cobler is accuſed of *attacking his own old friend*, and is put in mind of the apoſtle's advice, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 11. *Study to be quiet.*

It is eaſy to give advice, hard to follow it ourſelves. I grant however, that the above apoſtolic counſel may be more ſuited to the cobler as a layman, than to the author of *Thelyphthora* as a miniſter; as that author muſt well remember a converſation ſome years ago between two certain clergymen, when the one told the other "he intended *to leave off preaching and be quiet.*" "*Ah, Sir*, (anſwered the other) *the* "*devil loves quiet miniſters.*"

As to attacking his friend, this charge the cobler denies. It is true he attacked the errors of his friend, but the perſon of his friend he endeavored to treat with re-

ſpect, love, and regard. He wiſhes the author of *Thelyphthora* had obſerved *the ſame rule.*

XVII.

The author of *Thelyphthora* accuſes the cobler of ſetting forth " the *fair ſex* in ſuch " a light of *vengeance* and *aſſaſſination*, and " in ſhort, as *ſuch a ſet of furies*, as to out- " do, if poſſible, the three famed daugh- " ters of *Acheron* and *Nox*." He then adviſes the cobler " to put *ſome ſnakes into* " *their hair* in the next edition, and then " they may paſs for the lineal deſcendants " of *Alecto*, *Megæra*, and *Tiſiphone*." He then adds, " I marvel not that my friend " has ſtill to complain with *Horace*.

" *Martiis cælebs quid agam calendis?*"

Ah! my good friend, 'tis too late to offer the ladies *ſugar-plums*, when you have been pelting them with *hailſtones and coals of fire*; and placing them in a light little ſuperior to ſlaves in a *Turkiſh* ſeraglio. But the cobler has no cauſe to dread their diſpleaſure for any thing that he has ſaid, concerning the tenderneſs and delicacy of their feelings in his late piece, or of the effects

effects of that univerſal jealouſy which the doctrine contained in *Thelyphthora* will certainly ſpread among them. The injured ſex cannot yet have forgotten—but, *manet alta mente repoſtum*—a certain note concerning *queen Vaſhti*, which moſt of them have adjudged far more proper to have come from an *eaſtern baſhaw* than a *chriſtian divine*. However, the cobler has ſtill too much regard for his *old friend*, (notwithſtanding his ſevere perſonal reflection, couched under the line from *Horace*,) either to lend the females his *ſtrap*, or *to put ſnakes into their heads*; being certain that the firſt object of their vengeance would be the devoted author of *Thelyphthora*. But if that author has a mind to view ſome of the *bleſſed effects* of his own ſyſtem when eſtabliſhed by law, let him look at the windows of our picture-ſhops, and there he will be entertained with a print of two women belaboring a poor hen-pecked man, and under it, as nearly as I can recollect, the following words: *Polygamy in perfection*, or *Doctor Madman brought to the right uſe of his ſenſes*.

But if the author of *Thelyphthora* has any meaning at all in bringing the above line

from *Horace*, (the introduction of which is deemed, even by his beſt friends, to be a maſterpiece of inſolence and rudeneſs,) it muſt be the following—" Mr. *Hill* has uſed " the female ſex ſo ill, that no wonder " none of them will marry him."—But as it is true on the one ſide, that

There ſwims no gooſe ſo grey, but ſoon or late,
Can find ſome honeſt gander for her mate,

So it is equally true on the other, that

There is no Jack but may have his Gill;

In proof of which I ſhould be very unwilling to produce the author of *Thelyphthora*. However, I had much rather be lamenting with *Horace*—

" *Martiis cælebs quid agam calendis*,"

Than to be joining the cry of every old letcher and battered rake in the kingdom, upon the proſpect of Polygamy being eſtabliſhed by law,

O mihi preteritos referet ſi Jupiter annos!

I am ſure if I had no higher eſtimation of the marriage ſtate than what I could form upon reading *Thelyphthora*, I had much rather continue a batchelor all my life, than

than harbor a thought of entering into it. But ſo far am I from thinking that any thing I have advanced in the *Bleſſings of Polygamy* may be the means of incurring the diſapprobation of the ſex, that I am flattering myſelf that however much reaſon I may have had to *lament* my having hitherto lived ſingle, yet (though not quite in the prime of life) I may now find a favorable reception from ſome kind and amiable help meet. But happy indeed may the author of *Thelyphthora* eſteem himſelf that he made the marriage-knot ſure before he acquainted the world with his ideas of Polygamy, otherwiſe I think the poet's lamentation for the *calends* of *March* muſt have been his all his life long[G].

I have only to add, that if my friend wants a motto for his next publication, inſtead of going to *St. Paul* for it, I would adviſe him to have recourſe to the *celeſtial brilliancy* of DOCTOR GRAHAM *himſelf*, and to take the conſpicuous words

[G] Even this line of *Horace* ſhews, that the heathen nations ſuppoſed that ſome external form was neceſſary before marriage, otherwiſe this laſcivious poet would hardly have ſtiled himſelf *celebs*, a batchelor, as it is to be feared he had been frequently *married*, according to the *Thelyphtherian* ſyſtem.

which are painted on the outſide of his houſe in *Pall-Mall*,

"SACRED TO HYMEN."

Eſpecially as the electrical, hymeneal beds, on which the doctor advertiſes to *touch ſo delicately*, may prove very convenient for the accommodation of an additional wife now and then: For as to the ladies living together under the ſame roof, I think it muſt be quite given up, ſince we can hardly ſuppoſe there would ſubſiſt a ſufficient degree of harmony between them, even to put them on a footing with *Bayes*'s two kings of *Brentford*, who came in *ſmelling at the ſame noſegay* [H].

I muſt here beg leave to obſerve, that *Doctor Graham* as well as the author of a *Treatiſe on Female Ruin*, complains that the deſign of his *celeſtial bed* is much *miſunderſtood* through *ignorance* and *prejudice*, and aſſures the public, in the exact language of *Thelyphthora*, that this ſame electrical *torus* is by no means intended to be uſed in an *unlimited indiſcriminate* manner, but is re-

[H] Preface to the third vol. of *Thel.* p. 8. note.

ſerved

ſerved " ONLY FOR MARRIED PERSONS," that he has nothing in view but to promote the public good, to prevent *impurity*, *adultery*, and *divorce*, and to encourage *population* in many *noble and illuſtrious families*, which are now without heirs to inherit their titles and eſtates, and therefore he aſſures himſelf of the *patronage* and *approbation* of the great, the *learned*, and THE GOOD; and hopes for that *benevolence and encouragement from* THE LEGISLATURE *which the vaſt importance of the object merits.*" —The Doctor then adds the following *nota bene.*

☞ IN order to deter the wantonly laſcivious, the mere votaries of pleaſure from polluting the TEMPLE OF HYMEN, the following lines are written in golden capitals over the grand entrance.

ΟΥΔΕΙΣ ΑΚΑΘΑΡΤΟΣ ΕΙΣΙΤΩ!

Procul! O Procul eſte profani. VIRG.

Keep afar off ye profane ones!

See *Doctor Graham's Abſtract*, &c. given at the door to ſuch as attend his electrical experiments, and compare it with *Thelyphthora.*

But

But notwithſtanding the grave *procul eſte profani* of the *medico-electrical Doctor* and the pious admonitions of the author of *Thelyphthora* to a *holy* and *ſober uſe* of Polygamy, and to avoid an *exceſs* of it; notwithſtanding the joint aſſurances of theſe two adventrous perſonages that their highly extolled noſtrums of *Polygamy* and *hymeneal electricity* are only meant to promote the welfare of the community in general, as well as the happineſs of private families in particular, to put a ſtop to divorce, adultery, &c. and to encourage population, by furniſhing heirs to titles and eſtates;—yet, certain curious perſons who regard not the apoſtles advice, of being *quiet and minding their own buſineſs*, but muſt needs take a peep *behind the curtain*, have been hardy enough to try to perſuade the world that other ends of a very different nature are likely to be anſwered by the ſyſtems delivered to the world both by the one and the other of theſe learned gentlemen.

TO CONCLUDE:

I am told by the author of *Thelyphthora*, that "*forbearance is no acquittance*," (great *forbearance* truly,) and that the light in which he ſhall find himſelf obliged, in juſtice to the public (to ſay nothing of *Thelyphthora*,) to place me as a *critic* and a *philologiſt*, will hardly be more diſagreeable to myſelf than to the *author*. Then he adds, "but *be it remembered*, Sir, (a conviction already drawn up in the law phraſe,) [1]

[1] We may ſuppoſe the whole of the conviction to run as follows:

County of S——y. } BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the *twenty-third day of March* laſt paſt, and in the twenty-firſt year of the reign of his ſovereign majeſty lord George, of Great-Britain, France, and Ireland, king defender of the faith, and ſo forth. *Richard Hill*, of *Hawkſtone*, in the county of *Salop*, *latcher*, otherwiſe *cutler*, was duly convicted before me, *Martinus Scriblerus*, Eſq. one of his majeſty's juſtices aſſigned to keep the peace within the ſaid county, of divers crimes and miſdemeanors in the art of *criticiſm* and *philology*, he the ſaid *Richard Hill*, otherwiſe the *cutler*, not being duly qualified nor licenſed by the laws of *Thelyphthora* to exerciſe the art or myſtery of *criticiſm* or *philology* aforeſaid. I therefore the ſaid juſtice, upon due conſideration had of the premiſes, do adjudge that the ſaid *Richard Hill*, otherwiſe the *cutler*, hath incurred the penalty of *public whipping*, which ſaid penalty, I the within named juſtice ſhall inflict on the ſaid delinquent by my own hand and rod, within the ſpace of three months next enſuing from the date hereof. Given under my hand and ſeal, the day and year aforeſaid, MARTINUS SCRIBLERUS.

that

that happen what may, you have nobody to thank but yourſelf." In ſhort, the cobler has lamed the author's *hobby horſe*, and has ſent him limping and wincing away, and therefore in return he is reſolved that the *hobby horſe* ſhall kick the cobler's *brains out*. But, *parce minis, magne ſacerdos*. Pleaſe to recollect, that to *forbear threatening*, is an apoſtolic injunction. Let me alſo put you in mind, that though the cobler in this piece has adminiſtered a little moderate correction by *leathering*, yet the *awl*, the *hammer*, the *pinchers*, and the *paring-knife*, have not yet been taken up in his defence; and theſe are dangerous weapons to fall under.

Though the cobler would wiſh to maintain the ſpirit of a *Chriſtian*, yet he is not exempt from the feelings of a *man:* therefore, though he will not ſay

Nemo me impune laceſſit,

Yet he begs leave to let you know that there are a few lines in the ſatires of *Horace* which, upon ſome occaſions, may be more applicable to him than he himſelf would wiſh in his cooler moments.

—Ut

—— Ut pereat rubigine telum
Nec quiſquam noceat, cupido mihi pacis, at ille
Qui me commorit, melius non tangere clamo
Flebit, *&c. &c.*

Peace is my dear delight, not *Fleury*'s more,
Yet touch me and no miniſter ſo ſore. POPE.

But after all I am fully perſuaded that, as two ſeparate individuals, this controverſy is not likely to do either you or me any good in a ſpiritual way, though I eſteemed it abſolute matter of duty in me, to enter my proteſt againſt the unſcriptural doctrine and dangerous tendency of *Thelyphthora*. Having done this in two publications, I ſhall be happy to ſay with regard to all controverſy,

Hic . . . . cæſtus artemque repono,

But whether I am to add the other word (*victor*) or to turn it into *victus*, I muſt leave others to determine. One thing however is certain, that every day our pens are exerciſed in *vain janglings* and *diſputings*, we have reaſon to lament with one of old, when a day paſſed over his head without his having done any good, "*Perdidimus diem.*" God grant we may neither of us have cauſe to cry out with another

"*Heu! vitam perdidi operoſe nihil agendo.*"

Or

Or with a third great man of modern memory, who had juſt ſtrength enough to ſay at the laſt gaſp, "*The battle is fought, but the victory is loſt for ever.*"

N. B. The cobler finds ſome queries prefixed to the ſecond edition of *Thelyphthora*; but as many of them conſiſt in *begging* the queſtion, as others of them are *beſide* the queſtion, and as the objections contained in moſt of them are conſidered and anſwered in the *Bleſſings of Polygamy*, therefore the cobler will not animadvert on them particularly.—Beſides, it is rumored about that theſe queries were *borrowed* by the author of *Thelyphthora*.

Poſtſcript.

Poſtſcript.

SINCE I wrote the foregoing letter I have looked again into your Preface to the third volume, where I find an extract of a letter from a *reverend and learned correſpondent* of your's in favor of it. You have not indeed told us by whom the letter itſelf was written, but as I really believe there is only one reverend and learned Divine in all England (and I do allow him to be a truly upright and valuable man,) who *now* approves your book, though ſeveral others were at firſt ſtaggered by its plauſibility, I could venture to name the perſon without miſtake, as certainly as I could have determined who was meant by the author of *Thelyphthora* though his Treatiſe were anonymous. However if epiſtolary teſtimonies muſt be admitted on the one ſide, they certainly may on the other:

other : And as I dare ſay you will think I cannot follow a better example than your own, permit me to cite a few paſſages from ſome letters which I have now in my pocket on the ſubject. The firſt ſhall be an extract from one miniſter to another, with a ſight of which I have lately been favored.

" I hope you are going on with zeal, " comfort and ſucceſs in the bleſſed work " of an evangeliſt—make full proof of " your miniſtry—the days are evil, the " love of many is waxed cold—ſome have " brought in damnable errors—others " turn the grace of God into laſciviouſ- " neſs, and ſome have diſcovered the *ad-* " *vantage* and *privilege* of Polygamy *in the* " *new Teſtament !!!*

" The reaſoning, ſophiſtry, chicanery, " fallacy and poiſon of that book at firſt " appear plauſible and inſinuating, but " the charm preſently vaniſhes, the purity " of the goſpel ſhines through every at- " tempt to ſully its brightneſs—and we " diſcover the cloven foot of this angel of " light—and as a diſcerning miniſter ex- " preſſed it, pronounce the book to be " *Satan's plea, for a libidinous appetite.*"

The

The ſecond ſhall be from a joint friend of your's and mine, a gentleman of known learning and true religion, which I only received laſt night.

" We have peruſed with great pleaſure " The Bleſſings of Polygamy," thinking " the arguments concluſive, and admiring " the ſpirit in which it is written. To " tell you the truth the only fault we find " with it is that we think you are too la- " viſh in your encomiums upon the au- " thor of *Thelyphthora*. And we are " ſorry to ſee that they have ſo little effect, " by obſerving that he advertiſes a 3d vol. " with a letter to you. I ſhall be curious " to ſee what he has to ſay in reply."

The third ſhall be from a very worthy and learned friend of mine, who I hope will pardon the liberty I take in printing his letter (never deſigned for public view) without his knowledge; but as I am indebted to him for that judicious quotation from *Wall's Hiſtory of Infant Baptiſm*, which is contained in it, I think it much more honeſt to tell the world from whence I had it, than to let them ſuppoſe, I had collected it in the courſe of my own reading.

" Dear

" DEAR SIR,

" I ſhould have acknowledged the receipt " of *The Bleſſings of Polygamy diſplayed* ſooner; " but I was informed that you was gone " out of town; and I did not hear of your " return till Wedneſday laſt. I have read " it with great ſatisfaction; and, as an in- " dividual, have reaſon to ſay, that God " has made this unhappy controverſy about " Polygamy (like ſome others) a means of " information and ſettlement to my mind. " Long before I heard of Mr. M——'s book " I had been puzzled as to this point; and " the reading of *Thelyphthora* almoſt per- " ſuaded me to embrace the unchriſtian doc- " trine. However, at preſent I am ſatisfied " that, as a doctrine, it is inconſiſtent with " the New Teſtament; and, when practiſed, " full of the moſt dreadful conſequences. " For my ſatisfaction in this important mat- " ter, I am indebted to many, but eſpecially " to you, Sir, as an author, and to my dear " friend Mr. N— as a boſom companion.

" I have not read much of Mr. M——'s " reply to your addreſs, but, from what I " did read, am ſorry to ſee him ſo much " and ſo unjuſtly out of temper with you. " As to his threatening to expoſe you as a

" critic,

" critic, (ſo far as I am capable of judging)
" you have no cauſe to fear him.

" Should you ſend out another edition,
" the following quotation may perhaps
" ſtrengthen what you ſay at *p.* 66, 67.

" I eſteem it very material to obſerve by
" the bye this emphaſis of the word ἰδιος,
" for apprehending the force of a text of
" St. *Paul* againſt the Polygamiſts. Theſe
" men preſume to ſay, that there is no
" prohibition in the New Teſtament of
" the plurality of wives to one man. St.
" *Paul* 1 Cor. vii. 1, 2. perſuades people,
" if they can be ſo content, to an abſolute
" continence; but if they cannot, he al-
" lows marriage: but with this limitation
" ἑκαστος την ἑαυτε γυναικα ἐχἑτω, και ἑκαστη τον ἰδιον
" ἀνδρα ἐχἑτω. The true tranſlation of
" which words is, *Let every man have his*
" *own wife, and let every woman have a huſ-*
" *band peculiar to her.*—For as when *Ariſ-*
" *totle* ſays ἰδιον τουτο τοις ἀνθρωποις: It were a
" very imperfect rendering to tranſlate it;
" *men have this of their own:* which ought
" to be, *this is proper, or peculiar, to men.*
" And where he ſays, ὁ δε Βατραχος ἰδιον ἐχει
" την γλωσσαν; to ſay, *Frogs make their own*

" *noiſe*, would not reach the ſenſe: which " is, that *Frogs make a noiſe peculiar to* " *themſelves*. So it is an imperfect tranſ- " lation of the foreſaid words of the apo- " ſtle, which our Engliſh gives, *Let every* " *woman have her own huſband*. The word " ſignifies, *one peculiar to her*."

That the Lord Jeſus may keep you, and cauſe you to ſhine more and more unto the perfect day is the ſincere deſire of

Dear SIR,

Your very affectionate friend,

And obliged humble ſervant,

* * *.

P. S. The proper force of the word ιδιος, as oppoſed to κοινος, may alſo be ſeen, Acts iv. 32. και εδεις τι των υπαρχοντων αυτω ελεγεν ιδιον ειναι, αλλ' ην αυτοις απαντα κοινα.

I conclude the whole of theſe epiſtolary teſtimonies (though I could produce a great many more) with one which contains a practical comment on our author's doctrine. I have tranſcribed it from a letter written by a laborious miniſter of the

the Church of England to another clergyman, who lately incloſed it to me. Speaking of the pernicious effects of *Thelyphthora* in various places, he goes on as follows:

" There was an inſtance of this, a few " weeks ago, at L——l. A man amongſt " the Independents there, who had a wife " and five children, upon the ſtrength of " Mr. ——'s authority, prevailed upon a " widow (who kept a public houſe, and " had alſo five children by her late huſ- " band) to believe that Polygamy was law- " ful. She was weak enough to receive " him, his wife and five children into her " houſe; his wife was fooliſh enough to " go with him: they lived for a time ap- " parently comfortably together; the wo- " men ſat on each ſide him at table, and " when cuſtomers came in they ſerved " them by turns. The widow (as might " be expected) proved with child, and " when her friends attempted to part them, " and argued with the man upon the " wickedneſs of his conduct (with Mr. " ——'s book in his hand,) he defended " himſelf againſt all they could ſay. Thus " you ſee " *The Bleſſings of Polygamy* begin " to

" to be *diſplayed*, but what muſt the au-
" thor of ſuch an abominable perform-
" ance think of himſelf, when ſuch con-
" ſequences enſue?"

I imagine that, by this time, the author of *Thelyphthora* has ſeen as many extracts from letters as he wiſhes to read, and am alſo afraid that my *Supplement* to the " *Bleſſings of Polygamy*" will, if I add any more, be like the *Supplement* to *Chambers's Dictionary*, more bulky than the work itſelf; I therefore beg to ſubſcribe myſelf,

Rev. and dear Sir,

Still your ſincere friend,

And well-wiſher,

The COBLER.

FINIS.

The following Extract of a Letter having been received since the whole of my Pamphlet was printed off, and ſtitched up, I am obliged to place it where it ſtands.

MY DEAR SIR,

" I Have juſt finiſhed the reading of Mr. " M——'s *third* dry volume on his favorite " topic. His letter to you, Sir, which concludes " this dull, tedious compilation from popiſh " councils, ſynods, fathers, &c. gave me not a " little concern; not upon your account, but his. " The very reſpectful and friendly ſtyle with " which you accoſted him through your whole " book, when compared with the unceremonious, " pert, and ſneering dialect which diſgraces his " performance, muſt exhibit a contraſt very " much to Mr. M's diſadvantage, in the eye of " every man of candor and good breeding. In- " deed, Sir, I feared, upon the firſt peruſal of " your book, that you had rather exceeded in " the declarations of your friendſhip and reſpect " for this reverend Polygamiſt; and the event " hath at leaſt proved, that Mr. M. was unpre- " pared for *ſuch* an addreſs. His reflections, in " ſome parts, are groſsly *perſonal*, both when he " ſpeaks in plain Engliſh, and when he wraps " up the obnoxious ſentiment in learned ſcraps, " (*patches*, Horace would call them) of Latin. " Some of his *notes* are puerile and nugatory to " the laſt degree, and carry with them ſuch an " appearance of conſummate pedantry, as muſt " diſguſt every reader of true literary taſte. " And I muſt declare, that his letter through- " out is void of that liberality, to which he

" ſeems to lay ſo much claim. As for his cri-
" ticiſms, upon ſome parts of your book, the
" ſchool-boy, *qui uno partam colit aſſe Minervam*,
" ought to be aſhamed of them. And as for
" his mode of handling your arguments, it is
" executed with ſuch a cautious hand, as if the
" wary caſuiſt feared they would burn his fingers.
" But, it ſeems, Sir, your " learned friend," not
" content with the elaborate ſtrictures he has
" already made upon your piece, intends ſome-
" thing ſtill more formidable and ſevere againſt
" you, in the light of a *philologiſt*. I am ſorry
" to ſay, this intimation carries with it ſomething
" extremely unamiable. Mr. M. affects philo-
" logical knowledge; but he deſcends ſo low
" ſometimes, that his critiques are only worthy
" of the

" Tribes of word-catchers that live on ſyllables."

" However, he ſhould ceaſe his triumphing as a
" philologiſt, till he has anſwered the Monthly
" Reviewers. For, in the opinion of many, equal
" in claſſical knowledge to Mr. M. theſe able
" caſuiſts have refuted every argument which he
" hath founded upon biblical criticiſm; and
" they have challenged him to a fair combat.
" He may *affect* to treat their ſtrictures with
" ſovereign contempt: but under that lies con-
" cealed a dread to take up the gauntlet; of
" which they ſeem ſo juſtly convinced, that they
" declare publicly they " look upon him as
" yielding them the palm."

" I remain, dear Sir,
" Your moſt obliged friend,
" And obedient ſervant."

May 23, 1781. * * *.

THE

UNLAWFULNESS

OF

POLYGAMY

EVINCED.

[Price, One Shilling and Sixpence.]

THE

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OF

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ERRONEOUS INTERPRETATIONS

OF THE PASSAGES OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT,

RESPECTING THE

LAWS OF MARRIAGE,

Lately published in a Treatise on

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LONDON:

Printed for G. KEARSLY, Fleet-street.

M.DCC.LXXX.

TO

THE READER.

THE following Obſervations are offered from Motives of ſincere Regard for the preſent and future Happineſs of Mankind. They are deſigned to remind you of the true Meaning of the Paſſages of the New Teſtament reſpecting the Laws of Marriage, and to obviate the erroneous Interpretations of them lately publiſhed in the Treatiſe on Female Ruin. A Treatiſe which the Author of theſe Obſervations hath been induced to conſider, not from any Apprehenſions of the Influence of it upon the ſincere Chriſtian acquainted with the Senſe of the ſacred Writings, but from a View of the Illuſion, and Encouragement that may reſult from it to the Uninformed, the Prejudiced, and Vicious.

Perſons

Perſons of this Deſcription will ever be diſpoſed to credit Suggeſtions that favour their Conduct, and would gladly intrench themſelves under the Sanction and Authority of a Preacher of the Goſpel, in the preſent Caſe, however averſe they may be from attending to his Inſtructions in other Inſtances.

That the following Obſervations may conduce to the Promotion of the Purpoſes for which they are offered, is the Object of the ſincereſt Wiſhes of your, *&c.*

H. W.

LONDON,
Oct. 3, 1780.

THE

THE UNLAWFULNESS OF *POLYGAMY* EVINCED.

THE Author of Thelyphthora having aſſerted that Polygamy 'allowed by the Law of Moſes, is not prohibited by the Goſpel,' and that it was impoſſible that our bleſſed Lord, who came not to deſtroy the Law, but to fulfil it, ſhould condemn Polygamy as Adultery, we ſhall only conſider and obviate this Writer's erroneous Interpretations of the Paſſages of the New Teſtament reſpecting thoſe Points.

For if theſe Paſſages of the New Teſtament are found to afford no Foundation for our Author's Poſitions, he muſt appear to have been but

but erecting a Caſtle in the Air, and, after all the Expence of Labour he hath incurred, his mighty and elaborate Superſtructure muſt fall to the Ground. Moſt certainly, nothing leſs than the Authority of Revelation can determine on the Points here treated; the ſacred Writings are our only certain Rule of Faith and Conduct, and to no Truths ſhould we more readily ſubſcribe than to theſe aſſerted by thoſe early Writers of the Church, who, notwithſtanding their Errors are acknowledged, by one, who was as little partial to them as our Author, to have been 'the chief Ornaments of the Ages in which they lived;' "that we are not to attend to human Aſſertions, but to eſtabliſh our Queſtions by the Scriptures, which are our moſt certain, μαλλονδη μονη αποδειξις, or rather our only Demonſtration of the Truth of them; and that Δει παν ρημα η πραγμα πιστουσθαι τη μαρτυρια τῆς θεοπνευστε γραφης: every Aſſertion and Action, or every Thing that is ſaid or done, ought to be confirmed by the Evidence of the divinely-inſpired Writings."—*Clemens Alex. Strom. Baſil Ethu.*

Let us proceed to the Conſideration of the Paſſages of the New Teſtament erroneouſly interpreted

terpreted by our Author. The Author of Thelyphthora aſſerts that our bleſſed Lord's Diſcourſes, in the Beginning of the nineteenth Chapter of St. Matthew, and of the tenth of St. Mark, as well as in other Parts of the New Teſtament, concerning the Laws of Marriage, relate only to Divorce, yet muſt we affirm that they alſo condemn Polygamy; and that Polygamy allowed by the Law, is therefore forbidden under the Goſpel. The Truth of theſe Poſitions, muſt evidently appear to all who impartially review thoſe Paſſages.

'The Phariſees came to our Lord tempting him, and ſaying unto him, Is it lawful for a Man to put away his Wife for every Cauſe? And he anſwered, and ſaid unto them, Have ye not read, that he who made them at the Beginning, made them Male, and Female?' As though he had ſaid, have ye not read, in the Moſaic Account of the Creation, that God, from the Beginning of it, when he certainly conſtituted human Nature in a Way moſt conducive to your Happineſs, in creating your firſt Parents, made them Male and Female, or one Man, and one Woman, which would neither allow of Divorce or Polygamy? 'And ſaid, for

this Cauſe ſhall a Man leave Father and Mother, and ſhall adhere to his Wife, and they two ſhall be one Fleſh; wherefore they are no longer two, but one Fleſh; what therefore God hath joined together, ſaith he, under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, let not Man ſeparate, or put aſunder.' Let the Bond of Matrimony be eſteemed ſuch as nothing can diſſolve, except what can make them ceaſe to be one Fleſh by rendering the Perſon of one, common to ſome third Perſon. They are not to be ſeparated unleſs they have rendered themſelves one Fleſh with ſome other.

' They ſay unto him, Why then did Moſes command to give a Writing of Divorcement, and to diſmiſs or put her away? He ſaith unto them, Moſes, becauſe of the Hardneſs of your Hearts, ſuffered you to put away your Wives; but from the Beginning it was not ſo; and I, who appear to reduce this Inſtitution to its original Perfection, ſay unto you, that, under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, ' Whoſoever ſhall put away his Wife, except it be for Fornication, and ſhall marry another, committeth Adultery; and whoſo marrieth her that is put away, committeth Adultery.' The ſame Truths our Lord

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alſo aſſerts in the fifth of St. Matthew and ſixteenth of St. Luke: in the former, explaining the Law, he ſaith, that 'whoſoever ſhall put away his Wife, ſaving for the Cauſe of Fornication, cauſeth her to commit Adultery;' and whoſoever ſhall marry her that is divorced, committeth Adultery; in the latter, our Lord, aſſerting the Law in its utmoſt Extent, and Spirituality, affirms, that ſuch unjuſt Diſmiſſion of a Wife, and marrying another, were contrary to the original Deſign of Marriage and Adultery; for, 'whoſoever, putteth away his Wife and marrieth another, ſaith he, committeth Adultery: and whoſoever marrieth her that is put away from her Huſband, committeth Adultery.'

Upon our Lord having made ſuch expreſs Declaration, St. Matthew relates that his Diſciples ſay unto him, if the Caſe of a Man be ſo with his Wife, it is not good to marry. But he ſaid unto them, all Men cannot receive this Saying, ſave they to whom it is given.

With this Relation of St. Matthew, reſpecting the Points before us, let us review that of St. Mark. The Phariſees, ſaith this Evan-

geliſt, came to our Lord, and aſked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his Wife? tempting him, conceiving that his Reply might adminiſter ſome Pretence for Cenſure. And he anſwered and ſaid unto them, What did Moſes command you? And they ſaid, Moſes ſuffered to write a Bill of Divorcement, and to put her away: And Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid unto them, for the Hardneſs of your Heart, which prevented your perceiving and adhering to the firſt Inſtitution and original Deſign of Matrimony, he wrote you this Precept. But from the Beginning of the Creation, God would have it otherwiſe, for he made them Male and Female. For this Cauſe ſhall a Man leave his Father and Mother, and adhere to his Wife; and they twain ſhall be one Fleſh; ſo then they are no more twain, or two, but one Fleſh: What, therefore, God hath thus joined together, let no Man, under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, pretend to put aſunder. And, when in the Houſe, his Diſciples aſked him again of the ſame Matter: And he ſaith to them, that according to the original Deſign of Marriage, 'Whoſoever ſhall put away his Wife, and marry another, committeth Adultery againſt her,' ſhe, by the primitive Inſtitution

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of the conjugal Union being ſtill his Wife, and having the ſole Right to his Perſon; 'And if a Woman ſhall put away her Huſband, and be married to another, ſhe committeth Adultery.'

From the preceding Paſſages nothing can be more evident to an impartial Reader, than that our bleſſed Lord was ſpeaking of the primitive Inſtitution of Marriage; that he would have his Diſciples act according to the original Deſign of it; that he hath reduced the Law of Marriage to that primitive Inſtitution which would not admit of Divorce or Polygamy; that Man and Wife are by perſonal Union one Fleſh, and cannot be ſeparated except for perſonal Intercourſe with ſome other; that whoſoever ſhall put away his Wife and marry another, except for Fornication, committeth Adultery againſt her; and if a Woman ſhall put away her Huſband, and be married to another, ſhe committeth Adultery, the Huſband and Wife having by the original Inſtitution of Marriage the ſole Right to each other's Perſon: that not only the Huſband hath the ſole Right to the Perſon of his Wife, but that ſhe alſo hath the ſole Right to the Perſon of her Huſband: according to St. Paul's expreſs Commands, where he ſaith to avoid

avoid Fornication, let every Man have his own Wife, and every Woman her own Huſband.— " Let the Huſband render unto the Wife due Benevolence, and likewiſe the Wife unto the Huſband. The Wife hath not Power over her own Body, but the Huſband; and likewiſe the Huſband hath not Power over his own Body, but the Wife:" their Engagements being reciprocal, they are in Conſcience obliged to continue appropriate to each other.

With reſpect to the Remark of the Author of Thelyphthora, upon the Difference of Expreſſion in the original Words, εαυτὲ γυναικα and του ἰδιου ανδρα, which might be rendered, Let every Man have his own Wife, and every Woman her own proper Huſband.—The Difference may as well denote ſuch an Appropriation of the Huſband to the Wife, that he have no perſonal Intercourſe with any other Woman, as that ſhe ſhould not have perſonal Intercourſe with any other Man; and nothing can be more evident than the Unlawfulneſs of Polygamy from theſe Paſſages of St. Paul. For, if the Huſband hath not Power over his own Body, but the Wife, he, certainly, cannot transfer that Power by marrying another. We may alſo here add, that however the Au-

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thor of Thelyphthora may conceive that Doctor Whitby's Prejudices have warred againſt his Judgment, in his Note upon the 10th Chapter of St. Mark's Goſpel, and that he hath there found out "a *plain* Argument againſt Things not mentioned or even hinted at in the Text," we muſt beg Leave to obſerve, that that learned Commentator by no Means appears to have erred reſpecting the Intention and Meaning of our Lord in that Chapter, and that really Judgment, and not Prejudice, dictated the Comment.

That learned Writer, in the Words immediately preceding, and which are a Part of the Note that the Author of Thelyphthora hath quoted, ſaith, that from our Lord's Declaration, that he who putteth away his Wife and marrieth another, committeth Adultery againſt her, it clearly follows, 'that he who not having put her away marries another, muſt be guilty of the ſame Crime, ſeeing he muſt have the ſame Power to marry another when the firſt is put away, as when ſhe is not put away.' And then follows the reſt of the Note. What can more clearly refer to not only the Unlawfulneſs of Divorce, but alſo of Polygamy, and more evi-

dently condemn Polygamy as Adultery, than ſuch an expreſs Declaration, that whoſoever diſmiſſeth his Wife and marrieth another, committeth Adultery againſt her?—And what can be more evident from the preceding Relations of the Evangeliſts, and Declarations of the Apoſtle, than the Obligations of Huſband and Wife to continue entirely appropriate to each other, and that our bleſſed Lord in his Reply to the Phariſees, referred to the original Deſign of the conjugal Union, and hath reduced the Laws of it to the primitive Inſtitution of Matrimony?

With reſpect to the Beginning of the firſt Chapter of Deuteronomy, be it tranſlated imperatively, or as our Author deſires, hypothetically, yet, have we our Saviour's Authority to aſſert that, "for the Hardneſs of their Hearts Moſes wrote them the Precept concerning Divorce, and ſuffered them to diſmiſs their Wives, but from the *Beginning* it was not ſo."

Moſes, not as a Politician, as our Author would ſuggeſt, but as a Lawgiver, as God's Miniſter permitted Divorce. This was a divine Permiſſion,

Permiſſion, and therefore the Deity diſpenſed with his own Inſtitution.

The Jews were permitted to diſmiſs their Wives, for ſome Matter of Uncleanneſs. This Cauſe of Divorce was certainly ſomething leſs than Fornication, becauſe our Lord condemns it as an unjuſt Cauſe of Diſmiſſion, and yet permits Divorce in caſe of Fornication. Perhaps this Cauſe was neither what the Schools of Hillel nor Shammai adopted; and as our Lord allows Divorce in caſe of Adultery, and Adultery was puniſhed with Death, the Cauſe of Divorce permitted under the Old Teſtament, muſt have been ſomething between their Interpretations. Be it however what it may, it was permitted, and Chriſt only ſaith that under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel it ſhould not obtain, but that Chriſtians muſt act according to *his* Law reſpecting it, who hath reduced Matrimony to its primitive Inſtitution.

With relation to the Old Teſtament, our Lord here hath certainly preſcribed a *new* Law, which had not before obtained among the Jews. Divorces under the Old Teſtament were permitted for leſs Cauſes than Fornication; but

our Saviour under the Goſpel will not permit them, except in that Caſe. The Anſwer of Chriſt to the Phariſees reſpecting Divorce was, as our Author allows, 'grounded on the old Marriage Inſtitution;' and this, with relation to the Law, is certainly a *new* Diſpenſation.

Our Author, endeavouring to evade the Force of the twenty-eighth Verſe of the fifth Chapter of St. Matthew's Goſpel, affirms, that the Word Woman in the Original muſt mean ſuch a Woman as Adultery could be committed with, ſuppoſing the Thought brought forth into Act, p. 124. Let us review this Paſſage. 'Whoſoever looketh upon a Woman to luſt after her, hath already committed Adultery with her in his Heart.' The evident Meaning of theſe Words is, that whoſoever ſhall gaze on a Woman to luſt after her, and inſtead of rejecting, indulge the ſecret Workings of Deſire, or purpoſe alſo to gratify it, hath already committed Adultery with her in his Heart, he only having eſcaped for want of Opportunity to accompliſh his irregular Deſire. It is well known that the Word here tranſlated 'looketh on,' means to gaze on, or fix the Eye with the utmoſt Attention upon: nor can any Thing be more evident than

than that the original Word that is here tranſlated 'a Woman,' is, like אישה, a general Term, that diſtinguiſheth a Woman from a Man. Yet the Author of Thelyphthora would have us think, that the Word Woman here muſt certainly mean a Woman who is either eſpouſed or hath cohabited with her Huſband, (p. 124); as if Adultery could be committed with no other: and the Reaſon he gives for ſuch Interpretation, and his Inference from it, ſeem worthy the Attention of all Polygamiſts, that they may perceive not only by what ſound Criticiſm, but alſo by what powerful Evidence of Reaſon and Revelation their Cauſe can be ſupported.

Our Author, aware that if he cannot limit the Word Woman in this Paſſage to an eſpouſed or married Woman, the marrying two or three, or indeed more than one Virgin or Widow at once, muſt be here condemned as Adultery, hath very conſiſtently with his Attempts upon orher Paſſages, hereafter to be conſidered, endeavoured to perſuade us, that the original Word here tranſlated Woman, "cannot mean a Woman as generally diſtinguiſhed from a Man; for, ſaith he, if it be ſinful to look with Deſire on any Woman *whatſoever*, then it would

be ſinful for a Man to deſire his own Wife to whom he is lawfully married, or a Virgin to whom he is contracted; and this, ſaith our Author, (who is particularly fond of running out into Conſequences, and entertaining and well-known Anecdotes and Fables), would lead us into all the Abſurdities of the ancient Miſogamiſts, who held Marriage to be ſinful. In this Place, therefore, proceeds he, it certainly means a Woman conſidered as related to a Man, and that whether eſpouſed, or that hath cohabited with her Huſband, for with no other *can* Adultery be committed. For want of ſuch Diſtinction, ſome Commentators, adds he, by letting looſe their own Imaginations, have filled many of their Readers with Matter of ſore Diſtreſs and Bondage of Conſcience, as if the Deſire after any Female whatſoever came within what they call the ſpiritual Import of the Seventh Commandment." P. 121. But our Author, in endeavouring to releaſe us from theſe Matters of *ſore* Diſtreſs and *Bondage* of Conſcience, with which, for want of his *recondite* Diſtinction, ſome, I would ſay the Bulk of the moſt judicious and learned Commentators, 'have filled us,' unhappily hath really let looſe his *own* Imagination, and made a Diſtinction where

no Difference ſubſiſts, and hath proceeded ſo far as to advance a Poſition that hath no Foundation in the New Teſtament, even at the Expence of impeaching the Truth of his own preceding Aſſertions.

Our Author here expreſsly contradicts himſelf. For, in p. 42, he aſſerts, "that there are no ſpecific Names for married Perſons in the Old or New Teſtament, but only Words for a Man and Woman, that ſignify Perſons of the male and female Sex in general; but when coupled with Pronouns poſſeſſive, as ὁ ἀνήρ σου, thy Man, and ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ, his Woman, they denote the marriage Relation."

Such being our Author's Conceſſion, let us review the Original of this Paſſage of St. Matthew, and ſee whether any Pronoun poſſeſſive is coupled in it with the original Word for a Woman, or it means according to his Rule, only a Woman, or Female in general.

The original Words need only be read to ſettle this Point, and are theſe, Ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ βλέπων γυναῖκα πρὸς τὸ ἐπιθυμῆσαι αὐτῆς, ἤδη ἐμοίχευσεν αὐτὴν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ—

The Words here being οβλεπων γυναικα without any Pronoun poſſeſſive coupled with γυναικα, or a Woman, according to our Author's own Rule, muſt mean any Woman in general, be ſhe Virgin, Widow or Wife. Such are the extraordinary Obſervations and Deductions of our Author reſpecting this Paſſage of Scripture; in farther Reply to which, we muſt therefore remind him, that it moſt evidently condemns the perſonal Intercourſe of a married Man with any unmarried Woman; that it moſt certainly proves that the Deſire after any Female in general, except his own Wife, comes within what is called the ſpiritual Import of the ſeventh Commandment, that it condemns all Polygamy as Adultery, and therefore evinceth the Error of our Author's Aſſertion, that Adultery cannot be committed with any but an eſpouſed or married Woman. Adultery certainly cannot be committed in the Inſtance mentioned by the Author of Thelyphthora; though it hath been ſuggeſted, that a Caſe might occur in which a Man could be guilty of a Breach of the ſeventh Commandment, with his own Wife. But we ſhall decline the Conſideration of ſuch Inſtance, and all viſionary Refinements reſpecting it, nor particularly take Notice of this Writer's extraordinary

traordinary Suggeſtion, that " the Word Woman, here, muſt ſignify a married Woman, or elſe a Man who looks with Deſire on his Wife, muſt commit Adultery with her," as if any Woman in *general*, meant *any* Woman *whatſoever*, and no general Term allowed of any Exception. Diſmiſſing ſuch merely illuſive Quibbles, and evaſive Artifices, let us readily grant that the Woman here meant, muſt be ſuch an one as Adultery can be committed with; and remind our Reader, that the Author, when he defined Adultery to be the Commerce of the Sexes where the Woman is the Wife of another Man, p. 57, ſhould have truly completed the Definition; by adding alſo that it is the Commerce of the Sexes where the Man is the Huſband of another Woman: for our bleſſed Lord hath expreſsly declared, that whoſoever putteth away his Wife and marrieth another, or hath Commerce with another, committeth Adultery againſt her, his firſt Wife.

No matter, therefore, whether the Woman deſired be married or not; for if the Man who looks with Deſire on her, be married, he committeth Adultery in his Heart; and if an unmarried Man thus looks with Deſire on a Woman

Woman with whom Adultery can be committed, that is, on a married Woman, *he*, alſo, committeth Adultery with her in his Heart. Not both, but one of the Parties undoubtedly, muſt, be married, as we cannot ſuppoſe our Saviour to be here preſcribing a Law againſt a Caſe, or Inſtance that can never ſubſiſt. But yet, nothing can be more evident from our Lord's Words than, that whoſoever looketh with Deſire on a Woman with whom he can commit Adultery, a married Woman, or a ſingle Woman, if he be married, the Word Woman denoting all Women in general, is an Adulterer, or hath already committed Adultery with her in his Heart.

Our Author's Diſtinction, therefore, hath here no Foundation; nor have our Commentators let looſe their Imaginations beyond the Truth, though they have declared that the irregular Deſire after any Female whatſoever, with whom Adultery can be committed, comes within the ſpiritual Import of the ſeventh Commandment. Nor can any thing hence be more evident, than that Polygamy is a ſin under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, and that therefore the Prohibition of it *hath Warrant* from

from the Word of God. For as our Saviour hath here expreſsly aſſured us, that whoſoever looketh with irregular Deſire after any Woman with whom Adultery can be committed, hath already committed Adultery with her in his Heart; moſt certainly he who marrieth, or hath perſonal Intercourſe with her, muſt alſo be guilty of Adultery. With reſpect to the Conduct of the Patriarchs, and other Saints who lived before the Promulgation of the Goſpel, we ſhall not enquire into it, nor conſider for what Reaſons Polygamy was then permitted. Their Example is by no Means in every reſpect the Object of our Attention.

The Pattern of our bleſſed Lord is the only Object intitled to our Imitation, as it exemplifies ſuch a complete and perfect Plan of Piety and Morality, as was never before his Incarnation vouchſafed to Mankind. Our Author may be averſe from ſubſcribing to this Truth, but hath afforded us an acceſſional Proof of it. For as the Goſpel enjoins a purer Conduct, and prohibits all Polygamy which was permitted by the Old Teſtament, ſuch Prohibition evinceth the Superiority of the Rule preſcribed to our Behaviour in the former, to that of the latter.

It appears alſo, from the Paſſages adduced, that, contrary to our Author's Aſſertions, the Thought of Adultery and Polygamy were really *firſt condemned* when Chriſt ſaid, whoſoever looketh on a Woman to luſt after her, hath already committed Adultery with her in his Heart; and that Adultery, therefore, meant not "*quite as much in Moſes's Time, as in the Days of Chriſt and his Apoſtles;*" that the Thought of Adultery, when Polygamy was permitted, was *not* ſo ſinful as it would have been in St. Paul under the Goſpel; that the Scribes and Phariſees were ignorant of the ſpiritual Senſe of the Law; that our Saviour informed them, that unjuſt Divorce and Polygamy were unlawful under his Diſpenſation; that not only our exterior Conduct, but our very Thoughts, might be ſinful and adulterous, which the Law that forbad them to covet was not underſtood by them to mean; and that therefore our Lord hath introduced a new Law or Direction concerning thoſe Points.

The Author of Thelyphthora, in Page 192, aſſerts, that 'it is propable that Polygamy was very frequent amongſt the firſt Chriſtians.' 'Why, ſaith he, did Paul recommend the Choice of Biſhops from amongſt thoſe who had but

but one Wife? What Occaſion for this Caution, if none had more than one?'—In Reply to this Aſſertion, it might be obſerved, that after all Suggeſtions reſpecting the admitting Converts to the Rites of the Church, who were Polygamiſts, it might, perhaps, be ſupported, that not every Man who had long been in Habits of Vice, and Error, could, at once, relinquiſh them, and perfectly conform, in every Inſtance, to ſo pure and ſtrict a Rule of Behaviour as that of the Goſpel; and that the divine Wiſdom might at firſt, therefore, avoid too great Rigour in condemning Polygamy, and yet fix ſuch a Mark of Infamy upon ſo irregular a Practice, as to forbid any one, however extraordinary his Character might be, to undertake the Miniſtry, who was guilty of it; and alſo to diſcourage and condemn it by expreſs Injunctions againſt it.

This, it is to be confeſſed, may appear a larger Conceſſion than is neceſſary in the preſent Caſe. For the Injunction of one Wife refers by no Means to the Conduct of the firſt Chriſtians after their Converſion, but to the Practices of the Jews and Pagans; and we have no Authority from Scripture to aſſert, that the firſt Chriſ-

..ans were permitted to be Polygamiſts, but as our Lord and his Apoſtles have ſo particularly prohibited it, have Reaſon to believe that they conformed to their Prohibitions reſpecting it.

The Words of the Apoſtle by no Means authoriſe us to aſſert, that the firſt, or many of the firſt Chriſtians, were Polygamiſts after their Converſion. We are very ſenſible that at the Time when St. Paul wrote the Epiſtle to Timothy before us, many of the Jews and Pagans were Polygamiſts, and alſo particularly guilty of unjuſtly divorcing their Wives, and marrying others. And, from our Knowledge of this Practice, we learn the true Senſe of the Paſſage before us, in which he enjoins that a Biſhop be the Huſband of one Wife; which is this, that he have avoideth the Practice of the Jews and Greeks, and not, like them, been guilty of unjuſtly divorcing one Wife, and marrying another. The Paſſage therefore evidently refers, not to the Practices of the firſt Chriſtians after their Converſion, but to thoſe of the Jews and Pagans; and, inſtead of advancing, directly militates againſt Polygamy, or the Suppoſition that the firſt Chriſtians were guilty of it, by enjoining that a Biſhop be not one who hath unjuſtly

juſtly divorced one Wife, and married another, or that in this reſpect he be the Huſband of one Wife, which he could not be if he had married a ſecond Wife during the Life of the firſt, whom he had unjuſtly diſmiſſed.

The Apoſtle's Words in this Paſſage, therefore, *carry no tacit Allowance* of Polygamy, but a direct Prohibition of it, and an obvious Reference to the Practices of the Jews and Greeks, who were guilty of Polygamy and unlawful Divorces, which he forbids as inconſiſtent with the Conduct of a Chriſtian Paſtor, and the Purity of Manners enjoined by the Goſpel; and our Author, indeed, might as well have inferred from the Injunctions of St. Paul in this Chapter, that a Biſhop ought to be no Striker, not given to much Wine, and not covetous; that Wrath, Intemperance and Covetouſneſs, were frequent amongſt the firſt Chriſtians, as that they were Polygamiſts, and conſtrue every Prohibition of Vice into a tacit Allowance of it, and an Impeachment of the Conduct of all to whom it was addreſſed.

But let us attend to our Writer's Remarks upon Part of the Seventh Chapter of the Firſt Epiſtle

Epiſtle to the Corinthians. The Apoſtle in this Chapter anſwered ſome Queſtions of the Corinthians reſpecting the conjugal State, and in the introductory Verſes determines that in ſome Caſes it ſhould be entered into, and continued in, and in others avoided. 'Nevertheleſs, to avoid, or on Account of Fornications, ſaith the Apoſtle, let every Man have, or retain his own Wife; and let every Woman have, and retain her own proper Huſband. Let the Huſband render due Benevolence to the Wife, and in like Manner alſo the Wife unto the Huſband. For the Wife hath not Power over her own Body, but the Huſband; and the Huſband hath not Power over his own Body, but the Wife—their Engagements being mutual, they are obliged to remain appropriate to each other.' Our Author paraphraſes theſe Words thus: 'Let every Man retain the Woman who belongs to him, and not lend her out or ſuffer her to marry another, nor let him take a Woman who is not his Wife, but another Man's, to himſelf. So alſo let every Woman have her own proper Huſband; the Man appropriated to her excluſively of all other Men upon Earth, and not depart, or ſuffer herſelf to be lent or given to any other Man. Let the Huſband render to the Wife due

Benevo-

Benevolence, and likewiſe the Wife unto the Huſband. The Wife hath not Power over her own Body, ſo as to withdraw herſelf from the conjugal Debt; but the Huſband may, as Matter of Right, have Acceſs to her at all proper Times and Seaſons. Likewiſe the Huſband has not Power over his own Body, ſo as to withdraw from the conjugal Intercourſe, with his Wife; but the Wife, as a Debt due from the Contract which the Man is under to her by the very Terms of their Union, has a Right to his Society. Therefore defraud ye not one the other, &c.'

With reſpect to this our Author's Paraphraſe, it may be obſerved, that the Word in the Original, here tranſlated *have* or retain, (in the Verſe, "Let every Man *have* his own Wife, and every Woman *have* her own proper Huſband,") is the ſame in both Parts of the Verſe; and therefore ſhould convey the ſame Ideas or Injunction, when it coheres with the Words 'every Woman,' or the Wife, as when it agrees with the Words 'every Man,' or the Huſband. Our Author, therefore, had no Authority from the Original to ſuggeſt that the Apoſtle in theſe Paſſages intended to impoſe any greater Reſtraint upon the Wife than upon the Huſband; but

but that, as he here enjoins that every Man ſhall have his own Wife, and not lend her out, or ſuffer her to marry another Man; ſo, alſo, he enjoins that every Woman ſhall have her own proper Huſband, and not ſuffer *him* to be lent out, or marry any other Woman.

We may hence alſo obſerve, that the original Words, here tranſlated 'her own proper Huſband,' imply, as before remarked, not only ſuch an Appropriation of the Huſband to the Wife, as that *ſhe* ſhould not go to any other, but more naturally and obviouſly, ſuch an Appropriation of the Huſband to the Wife, excluſively of all other Women, that *he* ſhould not marry, or have perſonal Intercourſe with any other; and that our Author had no Ground for the Limitation here introduced, by ſubjoining the Apoſtle's Injunction, a Prohibition extending to *only* a matrimonial Connexion with 'another Man's Wife:' when a married Man, during the Life of his firſt Wife, except in caſe of lawful Divorce, hath no Power to marry, or have perſonal Intercourſe with any other, but is obliged to remain appropriated to his firſt Wife, excluſively of all other Women whatſoever.

We readily grant, that the Corinthians were guilty of Fornication and Adultery, of lending out their Wives, and having Women in common. Let us add, that they alſo, as well as other Heathens, and the Jews, were guilty of Divorce and Polygamy.

Yet, what one Deduction can hence be derived in favour of Polygamy? And, what can more evidently evince the Unlawfulneſs of Polygamy than the Paſſages of St. Paul before us?

If, according to our Author's Rule, we interpret them by the general Tenor of the New Teſtament, nothing can more plainly evince the Unlawfulneſs of Polygamy.

The general Tenor of the Declarations of our bleſſed Lord and his Apoſtles, is, that whoſoever diſmiſſeth his Wife, except for Fornication, and marrieth another, committeth Adultery againſt her, and that we are to conform to the primitive Inſtitution of Matrimony, which could not permit Polygamy. The Apoſtle, therefore, by commanding that every Man ſhould have or retain his own Wife, and

every Woman her own proper Huſband, muſt certainly mean to forbid not only all Fornication, and unjuſt Divorce, but alſo all Adultery and Polygamy. The ſame Truth is glareingly evident alſo, from the ſubſequent Words that 'the Wife hath not Power over her own Body, but the Huſband:' and, in *like Manner*, alſo, 'the Huſband hath not Power over *his* own Body, but the Wife;' they being obliged to continue appropriate to each other. It hence evidently appears that the Wife's Right is equal to that of the Huſband, expreſſed in exactly the ſame Words and declared to be the ſame, ομοιως δε και ο ανηρ, and that as the Huſband hath Power over the Perſon of the Wife, ſo alſo, in like Manner, hath the Wife Power over the Perſon of her Huſband. That therefore alſo the original Words ιδιον ανδρα and εαυτω γυναικα, rendered her own proper Huſband, and his own Wife, after all, mean but the ſame Thing, unleſs the Difference was made with a particular View to the Diſcouragement of Polygamy, and unjuſt Divorce, and evince her peculiar Right to the *whole* Perſon of her Huſband.

Certainly,

Certainly, ſuch are the Laws of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, concerning "the Buſineſs of Divorce and Polygamy," which therefore, contrary to our Author's Aſſertion, depend *not* "*wholly* upon the Law of Moſes." Moſes permitted Polygamy, and unjuſt Divorce; Chriſt prohibits both, and hath reduced Marriage to its primitive Inſtitution; therefore he hath certainly introduced a new, or another Law reſpecting them.

With regard to our Author's Aſſertion, that St. Paul's Injunction concerning the Choice of the Paſtors of the Church, muſt imply that there were many Chriſtians, '*not who had had*, but who, at the Time *when he wrote*, had more Wives than one;' and that 'if this had not been the Caſe, it would have been as much out of the Queſtion to have mentioned the having but one Wife, as to have ſaid that none ſhould be choſen but thoſe who had but one Head, or one Body, when it was not to be ſuppoſed that any Man had more.' P. 205.

Be it obſerved, that the Caſe is not parallel, for though we cannot ſuppoſe a Man to have more than one Head, or Body, yet he certainly might have not been fit for the Miniſtry, as he

VIII.

The author deſires me to aſk myſelf if I did not read his book with prejudice. "Did not your prejudices (ſays he) incline you to wiſh that they might rather be juſtified than removed?"—I anſwer ſincerely, that notwithſtanding the ſtrong prepoſſeſſions I had in favor of the author, yet I *had* imbibed very ſtrong prejudices againſt his performance before I read it. Theſe prejudices I attribute in great meaſure to ſome letters I had read, which were written by one *Paul* of *Tarſus* on the other ſide of the queſtion, and when I came to read your book, I really thought he was more than a match for you.

IX.

Though it ſeemed by our author's ſentiments as contained in the two firſt volumes of *Thelyphthora*, that no ſuch thing as fornication could exiſt, yet he now tells us there is ſuch an animal in the world as a whore, and gives us a moſt wonderful

the ſeventh commandment, and if not by that commandment, then by no other, and conſequently can be no ſin; for *where no law is, there is no tranſgreſſion.*

account

account of this creature in the following words:

" If this woman" (who has intercourſe with one man and is therefore according to our author, the wife of that man by the divine law) " departs from this *firſt* man " to another, the bond with the firſt is " totally vacated by her act of adultery; ſo " that the firſt man is totally releaſed from " her. If afterwards ſhe goes from man " to man, and ſells or gives her favors pro- " miſcuouſly to all alike, ſhe is every " bodys: no man can lay claim to her, " or look upon her as his *property*, or be " injured as a given appropriated huſband " might be, by her infidelity. She is in " ſhort, *nullius inter bona*, and is an whore, " harlot or proſtitute, in the true ſenſe of " theſe words."

From this very extraordinary definition it appears,

1ſt. That no unmarried woman (i. e. according to our author's ideas of marriage) can be a whore.

2dly. That no woman whatever can commit whoredom till ſhe has firſt committed adultery.

might have been one who had divorced one Wife, and married another; and therefore not ſo blameleſs and irreproachable, as the Apoſtle requires him to be. As to our Author's Remark, that the Injunction of the Apoſtle muſt imply that many of the firſt Converts to Chriſtianity were Polygamiſts, becauſe in his Epiſtle to Titus the Words are, Ει τις εστιν μιας γυναικος ανδρα; 'if any *be* the Huſband of one Wife,' and therefore muſt relate to the *then* Situation of the Converts to Chriſtianity; it is to be obſerved, that our Author hath here omitted a Word in this Paſſage. For St. Paul, directing Titus on what Principles he ſhould proceed in the Choice of Chriſtian Paſtors, here ſaith, Ει τις εστιν ανεγκλητος, μιας γυναικος ανηρ—'If any one be blameleſs; the Huſband of one Wife.' This Omiſſion, it is preſumed, was intended to more cloſely connect the ει τις εστιν with μιας γυναικος ανδρα, and thus cauſe the Apoſtle to appear to more ſtrongly ſpeak to our Writer's Purpoſe.

But this is not the Apoſtle's Intention; for though the Word εστιν, or *be*, is here uſed in the preſent Tenſe, yet the Paſſage, as before evinced, refers not to the Polygamy of Chriſtians after their Converſion, but to the then Situation of Jews and Pagans, and the former Conduct

duct of thoſe Converts who had been guilty of Polygamy or unlawful Divorce before their Converſion, and therefore *had had* more than one Wife; and accordingly the Apoſtle who required that the Paſtors of the Chriſtian Church ſhould be Perſons of exemplary Purity, and eminent for every ſocial and perſonal Virtue, enjoins that they be not choſen from amongſt thoſe who had had more than one Wife, or unjuſtly diſmiſſed one and married another; but that if a Perſon *be* the Huſband of one Wife, *i. e.* hath not *unjuſtly* diſmiſſed one Wife and married another, he might be conſtituted a Biſhop.

Our Author's Poſition therefore hath no Foundation from the Paſſage before us; and I conceive that we might as well ſuppoſe that all the firſt Chriſtians were guilty after their Converſion, of Extortion, Theft, Covetouſneſs, Idolatry, and of all other Vices mentioned in St. Paul's firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians, as of Polygamy. But St. Paul hath aſſured us to the contrary; and having particularly mentioned Fornicators, Whoremongers, and Adulterers, as well as Perſons who were guilty of the preceding Vices, informs us, that ſuch were ſome

of

of the Corinthians in their unconverted State, but that divine Grace had produced an happy Change in their State and Diſpoſition, and they were now, ſince their Converſion, waſhed, ſanctified, and purified.

Our Author obſerves upon theſe Paſſages of St. Paul, that it can hardly be ſuppoſed that if Polygamy were ſinful, the great Apoſtle ſhould be ſo liberal and particular in his Epiſtle to the Corinthians, in contemning other Species of illicit Commerce between the Sexes, and yet omit this in his black Catalogue. ' In Reply to this Suggeſtion, we muſt obſerve, that though the Apoſtle hath not inſerted the Word Polygamy in that Catalogue, yet hath he, by no Means, omitted to condemn the Crime it denotes.

For the Apoſtle in the Paſſages before us precautions the Corinthians of the fatal Effects of thoſe Sins in which they had indulged themſelves before their Converſion, and againſt all vain Imaginations that their having embraced Chriſtianity would ſecure them in the Practice of them. ' Be not deceived, ſaith he, neither Fornicators, nor Idolators, nor Adulterers, nor

Effeminate, nor Abuſers of themſelves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God, and ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the Name of our Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.' Polygamy, a Community of Women, Divorce and Adultery, being, confeſſedly, the Crimes of which the Corinthians were guilty before their Converſion, and that occaſioned this Epiſtle of St. Paul, moſt certainly, he hath here ſhewn his Zeal for the Law of Marriage, and condemned Polygamy as well as other Species of illicit Commerce between the Sexes, when he aſſureth them, that neither Fornicators nor Adulterers ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God. If our Judgment reſpecting the Meaning of the Apoſtle ſhould, as our Author agrees, be directed by the Conſideration of the Manners and Cuſtoms of the Corinthians, and the Tenour of the New Teſtament; the lending their Wives, a Community of Women, Divorce and Polygamy, being, at the Time St. Paul wrote, the Crimes they were guilty of; and this Apoſtle having declared that the Huſband hath no Power to transfer his Perſon to a ſecond Wife

during the Life of his firſt, and our bleſſed Lord having, in various Paſſages, expreſsly aſſerted, that whoſoever ſhall unjuſtly diſmiſs his Wife, and marry another, committeth Adultery againſt her, St. Paul muſt have conſidered Polygamy as Adultery, and therefore, when he here condemns Fornication and Adultery, he condemns Polygamy as well as other Species of illicit Commerce of the Sexes. If farther Proofs need be adduced, evincing that St. Paul hath condemned Polygamy as Adultery, and that the early Chriſtians were not Polygamiſts, thoſe Proofs will occur in the immediately ſubſequent Obſervations.

Our Author, Page 380, again conſiders the Paſſages of our Lord in the Goſpels of St. Matthew and Mark, reſpecting Divorce and Polygamy, and repeats the Aſſertion, that our Lord was not laying down a new Law; and that had he attempted any Thing oppoſite to the Law of Moſes, he would have fallen into the Snare of the Phariſees, who queſtioned him with a View to reproach him as an Enemy to it.—The Phariſees, proceeds our Author, attempted no Reply, which would certainly not have been the Caſe, had they underſtood him to have ſpo-

ken againſt Polygamy; neither did his own Diſciples underſtand him to ſpeak of any Thing but Divorce; for their Concluſion is, "If the Caſe of a Man be ſo with his Wife, it is not good to marry;" *i. e.* if a Man cannot get rid of his Wife when he pleaſeth, he had better not marry at all. P. 384.—The Concluſion, ſaith our Author, muſt have been made from their underſtanding Chriſt to ſpeak of Divorce; for it is totally foreign from the Matter of Polygamy. How could they poſſibly mean that a Man had better have no Wife at all, if he could not have more than one at once? It muſt likewiſe be ſuppoſed that they did not miſunderſtand their Maſter; for if they had, he would doubtleſs have ſet them right in his Reply, and not have ſaid what clearly ſhews them to have underſtood him right."

In Reply to theſe Suggeſtions, be it obſerv'd, that the Phariſees attempted no reproachful Anſwer to our Lord's Prohibition of unjuſt Divorce, though they plainly underſtood that his Prohibition was contrary to the Moſaic Permiſſion. Why therefore ſhould our Author aſſert, that if they had underſtood our Lord to have

ſpoken againſt Polygamy, they would certainly have replied to him?

With reſpect to our Lord's Diſciples, the very Reply which our Lord made to their Concluſion, from which our Author aſſerts that it appears that they underſtood him aright, evinceth that his Diſcourſes related to both Polygamy and Divorce, or at leaſt that the former was deducible from, and neceſſarily implied in them.

Our Lord's Diſciples ſay, "If this be the Caſe between a Man and his Wife, it is not good to marry." But he ſaid to them, "All Men cannot receive this Saying, that it is not good to marry, but only they to whom it is given, or who are able to ſubdue their Inclinations towards the conjugal State." If Polygamy was allowed as lawful by our Lord, and his Diſciples had more than one Wife each, his Reply would not have been pertinent to their Interference. For in ſuch Caſe, there would have been no Occaſion to have ſaid, that 'all Men cannot receive this Saying,' ſince, if one of a Diſciple's Wives was diſagreeable to him, he would have had others that would prevent his Inability to receive that Saying, or govern his Incli-

Inclinations towards the conjugal Union. The Diſciples, therefore, meant, not 'that they had better have no Wife at all, if they could not have more than one;' but that, as they could not have more than one Wife at once, they had better not marry, than be obliged to retain ſuch a one as might render them unhappy.

The Concluſion, therefore, is by no means foreign to the Matter of Polygamy any more than to that of Divorce, but is evidently deduced from their Obligation to have no more than one Wife at once, and undeniably evinceth, that they underſtood our Lord's Diſcourſe to relate to both Polygamy and Divorce.

Our Author, in Page 385, affirms, that the Word *another*, in the Paſſage, 'whoever ſhall put away his Wife, except it be for Fornication, and ſhall marry another, committeth Adultery againſt her,' muſt agree with the antecedent γυναικα, or Wife; that therefore the Word *Wife* muſt be underſtood as following the Word αλλην, another, and this may be conſtrued in the Senſe of αλλοτριαν γυναικα, *another Man's*

Man's Wife; and this extraordinary Conſtruction, he obſerves, is confirmed by the firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians, in which the Word αλλης is ſo uſed, υπο αλλης συνειδησεως, being there rightly tranſlated, "another Man's Conſcience." St. Paul, giving Directions concerning the eating Things offered to Idols, recommends the abſtaining from them to avoid Offence, and for Conſcience-ſake. 'Conſcience, ſaith he, not thine own, but of the others, who may be offended; for, in Acts obvious to Obſervation, this is to be recommended, but in what lies between God and my Soul, why is my Liberty judged of another Man's Conſcience?' υπο αλλης συνειδησεως. Of what Service this Quotation can be to our Author's Cauſe, is to all who read it, ſurely! a Problem. He cannot, certainly, mean that the Word αλλης means *only* another *Man's* Conſcience, and that it doth not alſo mean another *Woman's* Conſcience! Or ſhall we ſuppoſe him to have adopted the Aſſertion that Women have no Souls, and that therefore all the Apoſtles Directions were only intended for the Conduct of their Huſbands?

Our Author's Conſtruction, and deſigned Limitation of the Senſe of this Paſſage, can neither

neither be defended by the original Words, nor general Tenor of the New Teſtament. For though the original Word, γυναικα, hath a Pronoun poſſeſſive coupled with it in the former Part of this Verſe, as γυναικα αυτην, and therefore is rightly rendered his Wife, yet, what Authority can we have from the latter Part of it, where we have only αλλην, to affirm, that, if we underſtand the Word γυναικα to follow it, it muſt alſo be coupled with a Pronoun poſſeſſive, or be underſtood as if it was? The Verſe, in Truth, will admit of no ſuch Conſtruction; nor could poſſibly, even with his utmoſt Violence, be preſſed into his Service. Whoſoever putteth away his Wife, except it be for Fornication, and marrieth another Wife, that is, *any* other Woman, be ſhe Virgin, or Widow, whom he ſhall make his Wife, committeth Adultery againſt her, is undeniably the moſt natural and obvious, and the only Senſe in which any impartial Reader of the Words can poſſibly underſtand them. Let us, by a familiar Inſtance, exhibit the Abſurdity of ſuch forced Interpretation as our Author hath adopted.

Suppoſe two Bankers or Merchants, Adventurers for Life, had articled, that no third

Perſon ſhould be admitted to a Partnerſhip in their Houſes, and according to ſuch the original Deſign of their Contract, it ſhould by Deed be expreſſed that, " Whoſoever of them, without reaſonable Cauſe, ſhall diſmiſs his Partner and article with another, committeth Injuſtice againſt him, &c. Would any Court of Juſtice heſitate one Moment to pronounce the Party who ſhould preſume to thus diſmiſs his Partner, and article with another, to be guilty of Injuſtice, and liable to ſuch Penalty as ought to be adjudged to ſuch Procedure?

Could the Offender, in this Caſe, exculpate himſelf by pleading, that he had not articled with one who had been unjuſtly diſmiſſed from a Partnerſhip with others, but that he was one who had never before been in Buſineſs?

Would any one who wanted not to make the Words of the ſaid Deed conform to his own Prejudices and Deſigns, inſtead of regulating his own Sentiments by it, ever dream of preſſing ſo plain, and expreſs a Declaration into his Service by offering ſo great Violence to it? Would any impartial Reader ever conceive, that the Word, *another*, in " Whoſoever ſhall diſmiſs

diſmiſs his Partner, and article with another, muſt mean, not any Man whatſoever, but only one who had before been *another Man's Partner?*

What an extraordinary Figure muſt a Pleader make who ſhould adopt our Author's Mode of Interpretation, and thus comment upon theſe Words! "Whoſoever ſhall, without reaſonable Cauſe, diſmiſs his Partner, and article with another, committeth Injuſtice againſt him." "The Word another, muſt agree with the Antecedent, Partner; therefore the Word Partner muſt be underſtood as following the Word another, and this may be conſtrued in the Senſe of another Man's Partner." "And therefore whoſoever diſmiſſeth his Partner, and articles with another who hath not been in Buſineſs before, is not guilty of, or committeth no Injuſtice againſt him."

I am confident that Men in Buſineſs will view ſuch Mode of Conſtruction with no ſmall Degree of Surprize, and not in the leaſt be diſpoſed to thank our Author for ſo *ſhrewd* a Comment. Nor can it be conceived, as the ſacred Writings are our Rule of Sentiment and Conduct, that Society will acknowledge any Obligations for ſuch Violence offered to them, ſince,

by ſuch Meaſures, they may be compelled to ſubſcribe to the moſt pernicious Poſitions that any partial Writer may chuſe to advance. Indeed, ſuch being our Author's Mode of Interpretation, it muſt be confeſſed, that after all his Harangues concerning popular Error, and his entertaining and anile Fables, not to forget that of the reſpectable Whittington, we cannot give that Credit to his Judgment and Impartiality, to which his Imagination may ſuggeſt he hath a Right.

In Truth, after ſuch our Author's Mode of Interpretation, we cannot even conſider him, as he ſeems to repreſent himſelf, in his ſecond Volume, in ſo elevated and illuminated a Situation as 'the radiant Inhabitant of the Moon,' though as he hath been erecting Caſtles in the Air, he may probably have had a more than ordinary Connexion with that Satellite. To this Suggeſtion it is apprehended that ſome, who conſider his laudable Attempts to aſſert Polygamy, and recommend it to the Patronage of thoſe in Power, may be inclined to ſubſcribe, and at the ſame Time applaud his Modeſty, and *Diffidence*, when he aſcribes to himſelf a peerleſs Infallibility, and repreſents all thoſe who ſhall preſume

to

to diffent from him, as fit to be only ranked with the Tribe of merely impotent Scoffers, Cavillers, and Objectors, perhaps unworthy of a Superiority to the prefumptuous Quadrupede that vainly "infulted the Glories of the peerlefs Reign of the Moon."—But to proceed.

Neither our Author's extraordinary Conftruction, nor the Practices of Divorce and Exchange of Wives that prevailed amongft the Jews and Pagans, can evince that a married Man could not be guilty of Adultery, unleft his fecond Wife was a divorced Woman. This Truth we have already fufficiently evinced, but with a View to fome Suggeftions of our Author that have not been noticed, fhall repeat a Part of what hath been offered, with fome accefſional Obfervations refpecting them.

Our bleffed Lord, in the Gofpels of St. Mark and St. Luke, declareth, that 'whofo marrieth her that is put away, committeth Adultery.' But thefe Words can by no Means evince, that the married Man who during the Life of his firft Wife marrieth another who was a Virgin or Widow, or any other fingle Woman, commith not Adul-

tery, there being no ſuch particular Limitations in theſe or any other Paſſages of our Lord and his Apoſtles reſpecting this Subject. The Suggeſtions of our Author and others upon this Point, are merely conjectural, unſupported by any particular Evidence, and contrary to the various Declarations of the New Teſtament.

Our bleſſed Lord expreſsly declareth in St. Matthew's Goſpel, that whoſoever ſhall put away his Wife, except it be for Fornication, and ſhall marry another, committeth Adultery;—and in St. Mark's Goſpel, that whoſoever ſhall put away his Wife and marry another, committeth Adultery againſt her.—Here are evidently no Limitations of Adultery to the alone Inſtance of a married Man marrying a divorced Woman, or another Man's Wife, but the Words are obviouſly general. The Word, *another*, evidently being a general Term, and denoting any other Woman, be ſhe Virgin or Widow, any Woman whom he ſhall preſume to take as a Wife during the Life of his firſt. Our Author ſuggeſts, Page 374, that had our Lord intended to have con-

condemned thoſe who were guilty of Polygamy, "he would ſcarcely have made Uſe of Words which do not deſcribe their Situation, but of Words that did. It is very plain, proceeds he, that he that putteth away his Wife by giving her a Bill of Divorcement, could have nothing to do with the Man who took two Wives together, or one to another, and cohabited with both." But, ſurely! it is very plain that whoſoever putteth away his Wife and marrieth another, committeth Adultery, *hath* ſomething to do with the Man who took two Wives together, as well as with him who ſhould unlawfully divorce them. Had not our Author ended the Quotation at the Word *Divorcement*, and given us but a *Part* of the Verſe, the Reader muſt have ſeen that it *had* ſomething to do with the Polygamiſt; and this being the Caſe, our Lord hath uſed Words deſcriptive of his Situation.

Before our Author had attempted the preciſe Limitation of theſe Words to the Caſe of Divorce alone, he ſhould have been able to have evinced that Divorce and Exchange of Wives were the *only* Practices of the Jews and Pagans at the Time of our Lord's Incarnation, and thence have deduced that ſuch Practices muſt be the only

only Objects of these Discourses, and that consequently Divorce alone was the Subject intended by them. But our Author will acknowledge that the History of that Period evinceth, that not only Divorce and Exchange of Wives, but a Community of Women and Polygamy, or Fornication and Adultery, were the Practices of that Age: and, therefore, without 'interpreting Scripture according to our own Conceits, but by considering the Times when, Places where, and Situations of the Persons to whom it was addressed,' we farther deduce, that they afford no Ground for such Limitation as our Author would fix upon them.

With respect to the general Tenor of the New Testament, nothing can be more inconsistent with it than our Author's extraordinary Limitation. The New Testament gives no more Power to a married Man to marry another Woman, during the Life of his first Wife, than it gives to a Wife to marry another Man during the Life of her first Husband. St. Paul expressly commands both Husband and Wife, to continue inviolably, and intirely appropriate to each other.

To avoid Fornication, ſaith he, as before obſerved, let every Man have his own Wife, and let every Woman have her own proper Huſband; let the Huſband render to the Wife due Benevolence, and likewiſe alſo the Wife to the Huſband: The Wife hath not Power over her own Body, but the Huſband; and likewiſe alſo, the Huſband hath not Power over his own Body, but the Wife. Defraud ye not therefore one another, &c. The Rights of both Wife and Huſband are here declared to be equal, the Huſband hath not Power over his own Body, but the Wife; the Wife hath not Power over her own body, but the Huſband. If it be urged that the Huſband may yet, according to theſe Words, divide his Attention, and have more Wives than one, it may be alſo urged, that the Wife may divide *her* Attention, and have more *Huſbands* than one. To ſeriouſly affirm that each may ſo do, is to be ſeriouſly abſurd; and aſſert that both Huſband and Wife have, and have not, the Power over each others Perſons, at the ſame Time. If the Wife hath Power over the Perſon of her Huſband he cannot confer it upon another Woman; and if the Huſband hath Power over the Perſon

of

of his Wife, ſhe cannot transfer it to another Man.

The Wife, under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, may certainly plead the ſame Rights, in that Reſpect, as her Huſband, the Apoſtle having made no ſort of Difference in the Caſe before us. And our Saviour alſo ſpeaks the ſame Truth: for he not only declares, that if a Woman ſhall put away her Huſband, and marry another, *ſhe* committeth Adultery; but alſo that whoſoever ſhall put away his Wife, except for Fornication, and marry another, committeth Adultery againſt her. Mark 10.

The Paſſages of the New Teſtament, reſpecting the Laws of Matrimony, therefore, declare the Rights of both Huſband and Wife, to be equal, as to the Point before us, and exclude all Pretence for ſuch Limitation as ſome, by forced and erroneous Expoſitions, would extort from them.

I ſhall diſmiſs this Point with the ſubſequent farther Obſervations upon our Author's extraordinary Conſtruction of the former Part of the ninth Verſe of the nineteenth of St. Matthew.

Our

Our Author deſiring to aſſert the Privilege of a married Man marrying any Woman except another Man's Wife; let us juſt remark the Abſurdity of ſuch Limitation, and aſſert the Rights of the Wife, by tranſlating a ſimilar Paſſage of St. Mark, according to our Author's Mode of Conſtruction.

The Word, *another*, in whoſoever ſhall put away his Wife and marry another, ſaith our Author, 'muſt agree with the Antecedent, Wife; therefore the Word, *Wife*, muſt be underſtood as following the Word, *another*; and may be rendered in the Senſe of another Man's Wife.'

According to ſuch Tranſlation of this Paſſage of St. Matthew, let us tranſlate the following Paſſage of St. Mark: 'If a Woman ſhall put away her Huſband, and marry another, ſhe committeth Adultery.'

The Word *another*, ſay we, muſt here agree with the Antecedent, ανδρα, or *Huſband*; therefore the Word *Huſband* muſt be underſtood as following the Word αλλω, or *another*, and this may be conſtrued another Woman's Huſband.

According to ſuch Mode of Interpretation, therefore, our Lord's Words can here only mean that, if a Woman ſhall put away her Huſband and marry another Woman's Huſband, ſhe committeth Adultery: and the plain and obvious Inference deducible from this Interpretation is, that our Wives may put us away, and at once marry as many other Men as they pleaſe, provided they are not the Huſbands of other Women, without being guilty of Adultery.

Such forced and unwarrantable Interpretations of Scripture may, perhaps, be permitted to evince the Abſurdity of them; but, ſurely I ſhould, in all other Inſtances, be cautiouſly avoided, leſt the Ignorant be deceived, and the Vicious encouraged to perſevere in a Conduct that may prove fatal to their moſt important Intereſts.

With reſpect to the Conſideration of the Law of Moſes, the divine Permiſſions extended to thoſe who were under it, and other Suggeſtions of this Writer before us, they exceed the Limits of my Deſign; which was, to conſider only the Paſſages of the New Teſtament,

ment, reſpecting the Laws of Marriage, that he hath erroneouſly interpreted; and evince that Polygamy, allowed under the old Teſtament, is prohibited by Chriſt and his Apoſtles; becauſe upon their Authority alone, depends the Truth of that Point here treated.

Our Author, however, having endeavoured to deduce the Lawfulneſs of Polygamy from the Moſaic Permiſſion of it, and our Lord's Declarations that he came not to deſtroy the Moſaic moral Law, but to fulfil it, I ſhall conclude what hath been offered, with ſome Obſervations reſpecting ſuch this Writer's Deduction.

The Laws of the Old and New Teſtament certainly afford a complete Rule of Sentiment and Conduct. But yet, as, according to our Author's Aſſertion, the Law of Moſes permitted Polygamy and unjuſt Divorces, and Polygamy and unjuſt Divorces are prohibited by the Goſpel, we cannot but in thoſe Reſpects, amongſt others, conſider the Goſpel as a more perfect, explicit, and complete Rule of Sentiment, and Conduct, than the Law; and, con-

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ſequently, than any that was ever before vouchſafed to Mankind.

Our bleſſed Lord, exhorting to Beneficence, and reproving the Phariſees for their Deriſion, and undue Attachment to ſecular Purſuits, acquaints them, that a Diſpenſation was opening to the World, that would prove adequate to the Conviction of their Errors, and a perfect and effectual Rule of Behaviour.

'The Law and the Prophets, ſaid he, were until John; ſince that Time, the Kingdom of God is preached, and every one preſſeth into it.'

Yet, it is eaſier for Heaven and Earth to paſs away, than for one Tittle of the Law to fail.

And then, to evince that he meant to advance and perfect, and not deſtroy or impair the Law, he added that 'Whoſoever puts away his Wife, and marries another, commits Adultery.' Luke 16.

Our Lord's Deſign in theſe Paſſages, evidently, is to ſuggeſt that he and John had revealed

vealed a more excellent Rule of Sentiment and Conduct than that afforded by the Law and Prophets: that he and John had preſcribed more noble Precepts reſpecting Benevolence and Beneficence, and a proper Contempt of the World, than could be found in the Law or Prophets; who endeavoured to influence Men to the Performance of their Duty in general, by only temporal Motives. The Kingdom of God is now preached, ſaid he, and every one preſſeth into it; being ſuperior to the Influence of ſecular Objects, and animated by the moſt undoubted Aſſurances of endleſs Bliſs and Glory. And, as a farther Inſtance in Proof of this Truth, as well as that he came to perfect the Law of Moſes, he ſaid, that 'Whoſoever puts away his Wife and marrieth another, commits Adultery; and whoſoever marrieth her that is put away from her Huſband, commits Adultery:' intimating that the Law permitted unjuſt Divorces, but the Goſpel expreſſly forbids them. And, in the Verſe immediately preceding, obviating any Suggeſtion reſpecting his having a Deſign to deſtroy the Law, he declared, that 'Heaven and Earth ſhould ſooner paſs away, than one Tittle of the Law fail;' according to his Declarations in other Paſſages, that he came

not

ot to deſtroy the Law, but to fulfil it; that inſtead of abating the Force of it, he, as in the Inſtances adduced, came πληρωσαι, to fulfil, advance, perfect, and complete it.

Our bleſſed Lord was the true Light that enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World, or, according to the Hebrew Mode of ſpeaking, every Man that is born of Woman. He was the true Light that enlighteneth every Man, both Jews and Pagans, παντα ανθρωπον ερχομενον εις το κοσμον, and came idto the World, not ſurely to perform what was unneceſſary, and only what Moſes had *already* done? If this had been the Caſe, if Moſes had ſufficiently enlightened every Man, how could the Evangeliſt here ſtile our Savour, το φως αληθινον ο φωτιζει παντα ανθρωπον ερχομενον εις το κοσμον, the true Light that enlighteneth all Men, both Jews and Gentiles, that come into the World?

Our Lord is certainly the true and only Light that *duly* enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World. For he alone hath brought Life and Immortality to *full* Light, afforded us the moſt undoubted Aſſurances of eternal Happineſs in a future State, and ſhewed us the

Way that will infallibly lead to it, by preſcribing ſuch a perfect and complete Rule of Sentiment and Conduct, as was never before his Incarnation revealed to Mankind.

Our Saviour came not to deſtroy the typical, prophetic, or moral Part of the Law, but to fulfil what was typified by the Law, and foretold by the Prophets, to aſſert the full and ſpiritual Import of the Moſaic moral Law, and to advance and complete it. Our Author having aſſerted, that Polygamy was permitted by the Moſaic Law, and therefore not immoral, can have no Pretence upon ſuch Suppoſition to affirm, that our Lord, by prohibiting Polygamy, hath deſtroyed one Tittle of the moral Law of Moſes. For if Polygamy, permitted by Moſes, be not immoral, and therefore hath no relation to the moral Law, our Lord by prohibiting Polygamy, cannot have deſtroyed any Part of that Law.

Our Author ſuggeſts in Page 323, that if we aſſert that our Saviour hath revived an old, or exhibited a new Law, reſpecting Marriage, we ſhall adopt the Errors of Socinius and Mahomet, who affirmed that the Law of Moſes was abrogated

abrogated by Chriſt and others, and that a new and more excellent Law than that of Moſes is now preſcribed to our Conduct.

As our Writer is particularly fond of deducing Conſequences as Diſcouragements to the Adoption of Truths that militate againſt him, it may be neceſſary, previouſly to the Reply to the Suggeſtions before us, to declare that the Author of theſe Obſervations upon the Treatiſe on Female Ruin, is as ſincere a Friend to the Proteſtant Religion, and as remote from Heterodoxy, as the Writer of that Treatiſe can poſſibly be: that the Author of theſe Obſervations hath as great a Regard for the Fair Sex, and ever was as much inclined to the conjugal Union as any the ſincereſt Votary of Hymen exiſting: that the Author of theſe Obſervations is at this Time, and many Years hath been, a married Man: and that though his Situation is ſuch as might render him ſuperior to ordinary Reſtraint, yet hath he ever adhered to, and obſerved the eſtabliſhed Laws of Marriage, from Motives of Regard to the Injunctions of revealed Religion reſpecting it.

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With reſpect to our Author's Suggeſtions, that if we aſſert that Chriſt hath exhibited a new Law relating to Marriage, we muſt adopt the Errors of Socinus or Mahomet, who affirmed that the Law of Moſes was abrogated, and that our Lord and others had introduced a new Law more excellent than the former; ſurely we may remark, that our Writer hath exonerated *himſelf* from all Imputation of that Inſanity which he ſeems willing to indirectly aſcribe not only to Infidels, but alſo to all ſincere Chriſtians who diſſent from him. For, whereas he juſtly obſerves with Mr. Locke, that 'Madneſs is uſually allowed to be ſo far conſiſtent with itſelf, as to argue right from wrong Principles,' and hath moſt certainly properly applied this Obſervation to the impious Attempts of Socinus: yet hath our Author, in the Suggeſtions before us, not argued *right* from *wrong* Principles, but, conſiſtently with *himſelf*, argued wrong, from right Principles. We contend not that the moral Law is abrogated, but that our Lord hath perfected it, and exhibited a new Command, prohibiting Polygamy; and how ſuch an Aſſertion can entitle thoſe who adopt it to the Denominations of Socinians, Mahomedans, or Mad-

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men, muſt ſurely be a Problem that cannot eaſily be ſolved.

We are certainly obliged to obſerve the moral Precepts of the Moſaic Law, in all Inſtances where it correſponds with thoſe of the Goſpel, but muſt ingenuouſly confeſs that if, in any Inſtance, it differeth from that of the Goſpel, or permits what the Goſpel prohibits, we, as Chriſtians, muſt give the Preference to the latter. The Moſaic Law, according to our Author, permits Polygamy; we are convinced that the Chriſtian Law prohibits it: we are therefore indiſpenſably obliged to obey the latter, though its Injunctions are contrary to ſuch Moſaic Permiſſion. As to our Author's Suggeſtions reſpecting the Immutability of the Law of Moſes, and our Lord's Intention never to aſſume Authority to abrogate it, but only to fulfil all Righteouſneſs, atteſt the Perfection of the Law, and illuſtrate and explain it—Our bleſſed Lord certainly came to diveſt the Law of the falſe Interpretations of the Jews, and to explain, perfect, and complete it; and therefore if there be any Improvement, or Alteration of that Law, or any Revival of an old Law, or any new Precept exhibited in the Goſpel, all Chriſtians, knowing

knowing them, are indiſpenſably obliged to obſerve them.

The Plea of the Immutability, or Perpetuity of the Law of Moſes, cannot excuſe us if we are guilty of Polygamy under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel; the Moſaic Permiſſion of Polygamy could not be intended to be perpetual, becauſe Chriſt and his Apoſtles have abrogated it, and no Chriſtian can pretend to indulge a Liberty that they have prohibited. The Lawfulneſs of unjuſt Divorce might as well be deduced from the Immutability and Perpetuity of the Law of Moſes, as that of Polygamy. Our bleſſed Lord declared, that not one Tittle of the Law ſhould fail, and that he came not to deſtroy, but fulfil it; yet he hath moſt expreſsly abrogated the Permiſſion of Divorce in thoſe Inſtances in which it was permitted by Moſes.

Our Saviour certainly 'founded his Claim to the Character of the Meſſiah on the Old Teſtament, and never aſſumed Authority to abrogate the moral Law of Moſes;' but yet he hath perfected and completed it, and enacted a Law contrary to the Permiſſion of Divorce and Po-

 lygamy,

lygamy, without impeaching his own Veracity, or deſtroying the Moſaic Syſtem of Morals. Our Lord, certainly, might proteſt againſt all Intention to aboliſh the Moſaic Inſtitutes, and yet, without any Impeachment of his Veracity, illuſtrate, perfect, and complete them; for, ſurely, Completion and Abolition are not ſynonymous Terms!

Our Saviour ſubmitted to the Baptiſm of John, to filfil all Righteouſneſs, to own the Inſtitutions, comply with the Precepts, and juſtify the Wiſdom of God in ſending John to prepare his Way, by calling Men to Repentance.

In the 11th of Saint Matthew, our Saviour ſaith of St. John, that he was more than a Prophet; that none had riſen greater than John; and yet, that he who is leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, that the leaſt Prophet under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, is greater than he.—John is here repreſented as ſuperior to all ancient Prophets, on account of his Knowledge of the Myſteries of the Goſpel, his Teſtimony to Chriſt, and the Succeſs of his Labours, as well as his having been foretold by ancient Prophecy, and his miraculous Birth; yet, ſaith our Lord, he who is leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, is

greater

greater than he; the meaneſt Preachers of the Chriſtian Religion ſhall, in general, receive greater Supplies of the Spirit, and the Knowledge of many important Truths of the Goſpel, of which John was ignorant.

Our bleſſed Lord certainly came into the World to fulfil all Righteouſneſs, to preſcribe a complete Rule of Faith and Conduct, yet to do nothing of himſelf, but to preach the Doctrines of his Father, and teach as he gave him Commandment. John 12.—But can it be inferred from theſe Truths, that, as our Author ſuggeſts, our Lord could not intend, or have Power to prohibit Polygamy? No. The obvious Inferences from hence are, not that Chriſt by prohibiting Polygamy hath abrogated one Tittle of the Law, but only that he hath fulfilled, perfected and completed it; and that, as he taught as his Father gave him Commandment, his Prohibition of Polygamy, and all his Injunctions and Prohibitions, are agreeable to the divine Will.

The Law of Moſes, notwithſtanding our Author's Suggeſtions, moſt certainly never commanded Polygamy; the Moſaic Law reſpecting

Seduction, by no Means expreſſly commanding Polygamy, nor indiſputably extending to every Man; and our Saviour could not abrogate what never ſubſiſted. Our Lord hath revived an old or advanced a new Law reſpecting Marriage, and aboliſhed the Permiſſion of Polygamy, but, by no means, hath deſtroyed any Law of Moſes that commanded it; becauſe no ſuch Law ever ſubſiſted.

Our Saviour certainly atteſted the Excellence of the Law when he declared, that there is no Commandment greater than thoſe reſpecting our Love to God and Man.

The Commandment reſpecting our Love of God, is the principal and fundamental Command of the Law, and that to which all other are reducible and ſubordinate. The Law reſpecting the Love of our Neighbour is alſo like unto it. Every Duty to Man is reducible to, and will neceſſarily reſult from this Principle. The Law and the Prophets depend upon theſe Commandments, it being the Intention of all Revelation to promote them.

Grant

Grant we, therefore, theſe Truths alſo that our Lord, as before obſerved, hath diveſted the Law of the falſe Interpretations of the Jews, fully explained it, and declared that he came to fulfil it; let us even alſo indulge our Author with his Aſſertion that, when our Lord ſaid he had given to his Diſciples a *new* Commandment, that Commandment which is particularly ſtiled the Law of *Chriſt*, he meant only to eſtabliſh, and more powerfully enfore, an *old* Commandment; yet what Advantage can poſſibly be derived from theſe Conceſſions, to our Author's Cauſe? Will theſe Conceſſions evince, that becauſe our Lord came not to aboliſh the Moſaic moral Law, he could not fulfil, perfect, and complete it? Will they evince, that he could not forbid a Practice that Moſes had never enjoined? Becauſe they are inconſiſtent with an Intention to abrogate the Law, can they alſo be inconſiſtent with a Deſign to prohibit Polygamy, which the Law never commanded?

If our Author would effectually advance his Purpoſe, it ſhould be recollected that it will be incumbent upon him to not only exhibit unqueſtionable Evidence againſt the Abrogation of the Moſaic Permiſſion of Polygamy, but alſo to produce

produce an *expreſs* Command of Polygamy from the Law of Moſes. Previouſly to the Impeachment of our Lord's Veracity, who proteſted againſt the Abolition of the Law, diligent Search after the Command of Polygamy ſhould be made amongſt the Moſaic Inſtitutes; and if our Author's Imagination ſhould ſuggeſt to him, that the *deſirable* Injunction hath not eluded his Inquiry, he will have the Satisfaction of conceiveing that he is intitled to no trifling Acknowledgments from many *well-diſpoſed* People, whoſe Minds have hitherto been filled with Matters of *ſore* Reſtraint, by thoſe of our Commentators who were incapable of ſuch *deep*, and *beneficial* Inveſtigation. Nor hath our Author Reaſon to apprehend, that the Reſult of ſuch *laudable* Inquiries can prove, in the leaſt, inconſiſtent with his Profeſſions as a Freethinker in theſe Points, or as a *Friend* to the Law, and an Enemy to *vulgar* Prejudice, and Preconception. For the utmoſt Conſequences of the Inveſtigation of a Moſaic Injunction of Polygamy, can prove only that Moſes commanded all Votaries of Hymen not merely to look with Deſire after, but to freely have perſonal Intercourſe with, and, at once, marry as many

Women

Women as they pleaſed; and that all irregular Deſire and Commerce between the Sexes, and Adultery and Seduction, inſtead of being cenſurable, were commendable and virtuous, under the Moſaic Diſpenſation. But, *amato ludo*, it muſt be ingenuouſly confeſſed, that ſuch our Author's Reſearches would be intirely unneceſſary; for could the Reſult of them prove an expreſs Command of Polygamy, yet, as before obſerved, we as Chriſtians, muſt ſtill be indiſpenſibly obliged to adhere to the Injunctions of the Goſpel which expreſſly forbid it.

But to proceed. Chriſt hath, certainly, reduced the Law of Marriage to its primitive Inſtitution, and abrogated all Permiſſion of Polygamy, and unjuſt Divorce. Chriſt, therefore, hath prohibited, what our Author aſſerts was before permitted or diſpenſed with; and yet acted conſiſtently with his Declaration, that he came not to deſtroy, but to fulfil, advance and complete the Law: The Law of Moſes was primarily addreſſed to, and intended for, the Jews; and our Saviour hath perfected, advanced and rendered it, by the *Acceſſion* of the *Goſpel*, a moſt complete Rule of Faith and Conduct to all Mankind.

To theſe Truths it is preſumed our Author will readily ſubſcribe, unleſs he would avow a Purpoſe to advance the Doctrines and Commands of the Old Teſtament to a Superiority over thoſe of the New, or at leaſt to an Equality with the Goſpel as an univerſal Rule of Sentiment and Conduct, to which the Old Teſtament aſſerts no Claim.

Our Author aſſerts, that the Prohibition of Polygamy by our Lord, would prove an Impeachment of the divine Wiſdom and Preſcience, 'as arguing an Imbecility or Weakneſs 'of Underſtanding and Knowledge, like that 'of human Legiſlators, who make Laws to 'remedy Evils as they ariſe before them, but 'cannot tell what a Day may bring forth; and 'therefore repeal at one Time, the Law which 'they made at another.' Page 363.—This, it is confeſſed, is a pretty ſtrong Aſſertion, and ſeems to border upon ſomething worſe than Inſanity.

However, the Abſurdity of this Suggeſtion is adequate to its Strength and Confidence. For nothing can be more evident, than that ſuch a Prohibition of Polygamy is ſo remote from all Impeach-

Impeachment of the divine Wiſdom and Preſcience, as to be entirely conſonant with that Wiſdom which hath ever been viſible and admired in God's Regulation and Government of Mankind, and particularly in his revealing Doctrines and enacting Laws according to the Capacities and Situations of his Creatures, as they could bear them.

It becomes not finite Beings upon Earth to pretend to aſſign with Certainty the Reaſons of divine Permiſſions; various Solutions have been attempted, that ſome have adopted, others rejected, as muſt be the Caſe where Revelation hath not afforded any expreſs Declaration, or ſufficient Light reſpecting them. But, though we have no expreſs Declaration of Scripture concerning the Aſſertions before us, yet have we certain Facts evincing the Abſurdity and Error of them.

Our Author in the Paſſages tranſcribed, and in thoſe immediately preceding, hath confidently affirmed, that "It is as *impoſſible* that Chriſt "ſhould condemn Polygamy as Adultery, as "that he ſhould allow Adultery as lawful Com-"merce; and that to ſuppoſe God to ever re-

 "voke,

" voke, alter, or change the moral Inſtitutes of " the Old Teſtament, is to ſuppoſe ſome Defect " in the Deity, and impeach his Wiſdom and " Preſcience." Page 363.

Would not any Reader unacquainted with the Scriptures, infer from ſuch confident, not to ſay impious Aſſertions of a Preacher of the Goſpel, that no Inſtance of the Alteration or Repeal of any divine Inſtitutions and Laws can poſſibly be produced from the ſacred Writings?

Our Author's aſſerting the Immutability of the Law, and denying even Chriſt or the Deity a Power to revoke, alter, or perfect his moral Inſtitutes, induce one to think, that this Writer hath adopted certain metaphyſical Poſitions, which, by uſurping the Place of Truth, often prove the Source of pernicious Error. We muſt ſuppoſe our Author to have ſo long dwelt upon the eternal and unalterable Fitneſs and Unfitneſs of Things, as to have conceived all Change of them an Impoſſibility: when after all abſtract Reaſonings and Harangues upon theſe Points, nothing is more evident than that Things are only fit, or unfit, as they relate to the Capacities, Situations, and Condition of Mankind; and

and theſe Circumſtances changed or altered, that which was before fit, becomes unfit, and that which before was innocent and virtuous, is now criminal and vicious.

I ſhall conclude what hath been offered, with one Inſtance, amongſt others that might be adduced, that evince the Deity to have altered and even revoked, as well as permitted the Violation of his Inſtitutions and Laws, according to the Capacities, Condition, and Situations of Mankind.—God expreſsly commanded our firſt Parents, and their immediate Succeſſors, to increaſe and multiply, at a Time when their Situation was ſuch that they could not obey this Law, without committing an Act which by a ſubſequent Law hath been prohibited as a Sin of the deepeſt Dye.

All perſonal Intercourſe between Brother and Siſter, is expreſsly forbidden by the Levitical Law; and nothing is more ſeverely reprobated and condemned, in the New Teſtament, than the inceſtuous Commerce of the Sexes.

God's Command reſpecting Population by Perſons nearly related, hath therefore been abro-

gated by both the Old and New Teſtament, the Deity having, ſince their Promulgation, prohibited what before he permitted and enjoined. Nor can ſuch Prohibition, in the leaſt, impeach the Wiſdom or Knowledge of the Deity, ſince the Circumſtances and Situation of Mankind, at firſt, rendered ſuch Permiſſion indiſpenſably neceſſary.——We therefore can ſafely affirm, that it is *not* impoſſible that the Deity ſhould alter or revoke, or repeal at one Time the Law that he made at another.

THE END.

A

LETTER

TO THE

REV. MR. MADAN.

A

LETTER

TO THE

Rev. Mr. MADAN,

CONCERNING THE

CHAPTER of POLYGAMY,

IN HIS

LATE PUBLICATION,

ENTITLED

THELYPTHORA.

By A LAYMAN.

I always rejoice at TRUTH, which is the greatest Ornament of Criticism. ——
Earl of Mansfield.

LONDON:
Printed for FIELDING and WALKER,
Paternoster-Row.
MDCCLXXX.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of the following Leaves, delivers them to the Public, with that Caution which the Importance of the Matter requires.—He has been induced to take up the Pen, from the Abhorrence in which he holds the Syſtem endeavoured to be eſtabliſhed in that Work, which

is

is now the Subject of his Comment; and from a Conviction that it will not ſtand the Teſt of God's Word, when taken in the Aggregate.—How far he has ſucceeded in his Ideas upon the Occaſion, muſt be left to the Judgment of the Reader.

The Writer is aware of the ſacred Ground on which he is treading, while as a human Creature, he preſumes to offer any

Illuſtration

Illuſtration of the Word of God. If in this Part of his Undertaking he ſhould be found to have erred, he is not only *willing* but *deſirous* to be corrected:—only reſerving to himſelf the Conſciouſneſs of not having intended to put any Conſtructions on the Word of Truth, inconſiſtent with the Glory and Perfections of it's Author.

For the feeble Manner in which he has ſupported his own Convictions;

victions; and for the Inaccuracies of Stile and Compoſition, the Writer craves the Indulgence of thoſe, into whoſe Hands this Trifle may fall.

October 5, 1780.

A LET-

A

LETTER, &c.

REV. SIR,

THE work which you have lately delivered to the public, is calculated to call forth the attention of every ſerious-minded man; as it is fraught with principles, which, if ſuffered to take place, muſt produce ſome very important revolutions in the manners of the world. I have peruſed the perform-

ance with that caution and diligence which it required. I entered upon it without having my judgment perverted with thoſe prejudices which too frequently actuate the multitude.

I am now about to offer an obſervation or two upon what I conceive to be the moſt material part of your work ;—I mean the Chapter of Polygamy. I am not unconſcious of my own incompetency to enter the liſts with you, on the matter of critical diſquiſition. If our preſent ſubject required the aid of ſcholaſtic erudition, I ſhould tremble at the idea of hazarding an opinion contradictory to your own.

Believe

Believe me, Sir, this is not the language of compliment, for no one holds in more ſincere admiration the depth of your argument, the cloſeneſs of your reaſoning, or the profundity of your talents; but you are hardly to be reminded that you have endeavoured to eſtabliſh your ſyſtem on the *written word of God*, abſtractedly from all other authorities; conſequently any perſon who can read the Bible with that ſpirit which renders it *profitable for inſtruction*, is equal to the defence of any truth, or the oppoſing any error, with the moſt learned Drawcanſir who ever wielded a pen in the field of argument.

The chief object of your labours seems to be the justification of POLYGAMY; a mode of conduct, it must be confessed, not unfrequently adopted by the world *in practice*, though rarely hitherto vindicated on *principle*. This task was reserved for a Gentleman of your order and character. You have, in truth, produced authorities innumerable from the Scriptures; but you will pardon me when I intimate my suspicions from what I have read, that you have made those authorities correspond with your system, instead of rendering the system subservient to the *word of truth*; or, to speak in plainer terms, it appears to me

that

that you have made the Bible rather the prop, than the foundation, of your hypotheſis.

Inſtances have been produced by you, almoſt without number, wherein many characters under the Moſaic diſpenſation lived in a ſtate of polygamy, without it's having appeared that they thereby incurred the diſpleaſure of their God. This cannot be attempted to be denied: but it becomes a queſtion of very great importance, and well worthy of mature conſideration, whether theſe facts were not permitted, as the eſpecial means, to anſwer ſome very particular purpoſes in the theocracy over the Jews.

It has been, I believe, conjectured, that this, among other circumſtances, was intended to ſecure the promiſed Meſſiah from the imputation of deſcending otherwiſe, than from the ſeed of Abraham, and that ſo ſoon as this end was accompliſhed, the plurality of wives was no longer to be warranted.

To account for the manner in which this conjecture might be ſuppoſed to operate, is more than I undertake. Nor indeed can it be for man to enter into the *ſecret counſels of God*. However, all this conjectural reaſoning is of no avail, as it leads to no certain concluſions.

Admitting

Admitting the force to be derived from the inſtances recorded in the Old Teſtament, it remains to be proved, that this mode of conduct ſtands juſtified under the goſpel diſpenſation.

You have with great propriety repeated to us the argument, that as God is the author of the moral, as well as of the religious world, whatever was by him, at the firſt foundation of the creation, conſtituted *moral*, muſt, according to the eternity of his law, continue ſo to the end. In ſupport of this, you properly introduce the well known aſſertion of our Lord, who tells us, Matt. v. 17, 18. "Think not I am come to

"deſtroy

" deſtroy the Law, or the Prophets; I " am not come to deſtroy, but to fulfil.

" For verily I ſay unto you, 'till " Heaven and Earth paſs, one jot, or " one tittle, ſhall in no wiſe paſs, ('*till* " *all ſhall be fulfilled* *".)

We admit this as an irrefragable poſition; but in admitting it, we muſt be cautious in aſcertaining what *really* conſtitutes this law; otherwiſe, in the language of Lord Shafteſbury †, " We

* It is rather remarkable, Mr. M. when he quotes this authority of our Lord, leaves out this very material part of it—But more of this preſently.

† I deſire to be properly underſtood. I do not introduce his lordſhip as any authority, I only adopt his phraſe.

" may

" may chance to do God little honour,
" when we intended him the moſt."
Here the queſtion is, whether the term
" Law," in this place, comprehends
within its meaning, the whole of the
Moſaic Code, whether ceremonial, poli-
tical, or moral.

If I underſtand your opinion, you in-
fer from it, that whatever ſtands re-
corded as the Law, of whatever nature
it may be, under the Moſaic Diſpenſati-
on, is equally obligatory under that of
Chriſt. I believe many will differ from
you; becauſe it can hardly admit of a
doubt, that there were ſome laws cal-
culated for the peculiar direction of the

Jewiſh nation, in their political capacity, which were not intended as permanent rules of government to the ſucceeding world; conſequently, though theſe were laws declared by God himſelf, through the inſtrumentality of his ſervant Moſes, they did not conſtitute part of his eternal Law, but were only intended as a portion of their ordinary juriſprudence, accommodated to the nature, and to the temporary exigence of the people.

Few perſons, I apprehend, are ſo unacquainted with their Bible, as to require many proofs to be brought forward to illuſtrate the propriety of this opinion: —

opinion: — but by way of ſupporting the argument, we will refer the Reader to one or two caſes, which will ſtrike conviction on the ſubject.

In the firſt place, the original command, "Increaſe and multiply," muſt, in the earlieſt inſtances, have been fulfilled through the medium of inceſtuous commerce: — but when the world had become ſufficiently peopled, this no longer was permitted; — and thence it became ſin. This is a proof that means were occaſionally made uſe of to forward the divine purpoſes, which, when compleated, ceaſed to be lawful; — hence it appears, that the law of which

we are ſpeaking, was ſubject to that variation, which the urgency of events at that time rendered neceſſary.

Exodus xxi. 28, 29. furniſhes us with another inſtance, proving the propriety of our ſentiments on this head. The Word of God there ſays,

"If an ox gore a man or a woman "that they die, then the ox ſhall be "ſurely ſtoned, and his fleſh ſhall not "be eaten, but the owner of the ox "ſhall be quit.

"But if the ox were wont to puſh "with his horn in time paſt, and it "hath been teſtified to his owner, and "he hath not kept him in, but that he

"hath

" hath killed a man or a woman, the " ox ſhall be ſtoned, *and his owner alſo* " *ſhall be put to death.*"

Is it to be believed, that, under the government of the New Teſtament, this ſtatute continues to operate as an unrepealed command? Surely not. It could only be intended as a part of the civil policy of the Jews, and by no means as a portion of the unchangeable law of God.

Again, we find in Leviticus xxiv. 20. it is declared that there ſhall be " breach " for breach, eye for eye, tooth for " tooth; as he hath cauſed a blemiſh " in a man, ſo ſhall it be done to him " again."

" again." This law was abrogated by Chriſt himſelf, when upon earth.

Theſe extracts from the only infallible guide, *the Word of Truth*, will, I apprehend, by every candid enquirer, be admitted as authorities ſufficiently proving, that *every* law which was given by Moſes to the Jews, cannot be conſidered, in *each* inſtance, as the unchanging ſtandard of God's will.

It muſt be allowed, that throughout your Publication, you have proved yourſelf an indefatigable advocate for the univerſality and immutability of *every* command which ſtands recorded on the faithful page of ſacred hiſtory.

In

In the ſupport of this train of ideas, you have adopted the only method of ſtamping conviction on the minds of your Readers, *comparing Scripture with Scripture*. In doing this, however, the exceſs of your zeal has ſometimes hurried you into concluſions by no means correſpondent with the letter of the text.

It is here that I cannot forbear making what, by ſome, may be deemed a preſumptuous obſervation, That in ſeveral comments, interpretations, and paraphraſes, which you have made on the ſacred authorities introduced, you have put ſuch conſtructions on them, as evi-

dently

dently to deſtroy or pervert their literal meaning. In confirmation of this aſſertion, I think I can appeal to two or three inſtances, wherein I am inclined to believe I ſhall be joined by every impartial and unprejudided perſon.

The firſt inſtance of this kind to be brought forward, ſhall be preciſely in your own words: "*Ye have heard that* "*it hath been ſaid, An eye for an eye, a* "*tooth for a tooth; but I ſay unto you,* "*that ye reſiſt not evil, but whoſoever* "*ſhall ſmite thee on the right cheek, turn* "*to him the other alſo,* &c. This refers "to Exodus xxi. 24. where the Law of "retaliation was enacted, to be admi-

"niſtered

" niſtered by the Judges of Iſrael in a " judicial way, on the lawful conviction " of offenders: but the Jews, who " were taught to abuſe every thing, " made this a rule of proceeding in their " own private acts of revenge upon " one another. Such a temper and " diſpoſition as this was very ſinful to " indulge, much more to gratify; our " Lord therefore checks this, by teach- " ing patience and forbearance, and " doing good to, rather than injuring " their enemies. BUT STILL HERE IS " NO NEW LAW."

Now, Sir, without bewildering our- ſelves in the ſubtleties of ſophiſtry, let

me aſk you what can be plainer than this being a *new* law? Our Saviour tells us, "Ye have heard, that it hath been "ſaid, an eye for an eye, &c. But "I ſay unto you, that ye reſiſt not evil," &c. Inaſmuch as if he had ſaid, you know that it has hitherto been a part of the law, that retaliation ſhould in every inſtance take place: but the ſpirit of my government, is of a more benign, and humble nature; I will not that you do ſo now; for inſtead of urging your reſentments for the injuries you may receive in the world, it is the expreſs command of me, JEHOVAH, who am greater than Moſes, to you my Diſciples,

ciples, that you reſiſt not, and that ye endue yourſelves with that paſſive courage, which can alone render you meet for the kingdom of Heaven.

I will not heſitate to aſſert, that ſo plainly as language can be underſtood, it is ſtrongly implied that our Lord's doctrine was (in this inſtance) of a ſpirit totally repugnant to, and ſubverſive of that of Moſes, and conſequently, it was to every intent and purpoſe a *new* law.

Happily for the ſentiment which we here embrace, this is not the only authority in illuſtration of it's propriety. It ſtands

connected with other paſſages, equally as ſtrong, if not more in point. That ſacred character, who ſpeaking of himſelf, tells us, that he is "*The way, the truth, and the life,*" has in Matt. v. 43, 44. this remarkable injunction: "Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid, "thou ſhalt love thy neighbour, and "hate thine enemy: But I ſay unto "you, love your enemies, bleſs them "that curſe you, do good to them that "hate you, and pray for them which "deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute "you." The ſame divine perſon, "*who ſpake as never man ſpake,*" utters theſe expreſſive words, John xiii. 34.

"A

" A *new* commandment I give unto you,
" that ye love one another; as I have
" loved you, that ye alſo love one ano-
" ther."

If words can convey any preciſe idea, it evidently appears from theſe paſſages in the New Teſtament, that ſome of the leading principles of the Moſaic law were abrogated by Chriſt himſelf; and that in their ſtead a *new* ſyſtem was ſet up, of an infinitely more refined and ſpiritual nature.

In order to juſtify myſelf in having brought againſt you ſo heavy a charge, as that of deſtroying the ſenſe of your ſcriptural quotations, I ſhall proceed to bring

bring forward another inſtance. A faithful extract from your Work ſhall be my beſt teſtimony.

" To contend for Chriſt's enacting " any *new* law, contrary to the law of " nature, and of the Old Teſtament, is " to call in queſtion his veracity, and to " place him in a rank of *impoſture*, even " below *Mahomet* himſelf. *Mahomet* " profeſſed to deſtroy *the law and the* " *prophets*, as they had deſtroyed all " *preceding ſyſtems:* whereas Chriſt moſt " ſolemnly declared, that *heaven and* " *earth could ſooner paſs, than one jot or* " *tittle paſs from the law. Think not,* " ſaid he, that I came to deſtroy the

" law.

" law or the Prophets, I am not come
" to deſtroy, but to fulfil." So far from
" abrogating the *law*, or *rule of life*,
" which had been delivered by the hand
" of *Moſes*, or ſetting up a *new law* in
" oppoſition to it; he came into the
" world to be ſubject to it in all things,
" and ſo to fulfil the *whole righteouſneſs*
" of it, Matt. iii. 15."

Before I make any animadverſions upon this paſſage, I am deſirous to be informed of the reaſon, which induced you to omit the very material clauſe, annexed to that authority of our Lord, which you here introduce, that " Heaven and earth could

" ſooner

" ſooner paſs, than one jot or tittle paſs " from the law." You ſhould at any rate have given us the whole of the ſentence, if you meant to be candid in your inference, but " you alter the text, and " make a refutable doctrine of your " own." Our Saviour adds *that*, which makes the moſt material part of the argument, *till all ſhall be fulfilled.* Thereby qualifying the general aſſertion, and doubtleſs intending to convey the idea, that a period was approaching, when this law was to be done away: the epocha of this great event was to take place at that moment when *all ſhould be fulfilled.* What was implied by

by this fulfilment; and its conſequences ſhall be taken notice of hereafter.

If I were to tell my ſervant, that itwas not my intention to *pay him his hire*,—*till he ſhould have finiſhed his work*, he would reſt ſatisfied; take away, however, the latter clauſe, he would then, indeed, have reaſon to fear that I *never* meant to do him juſtice. However familiar this mode of reaſoning may appear to a perſon of your ſuperior faculties, I have no doubt of your entering into its principle. I am really apprehenſive, from the manner in which you have maimed the text to which we bear reference, you were conſcious, that, if taken in its *entire*, literal con-

ſtruction, it would prove too much for your purpoſe, " and of courſe (in your " own words on another occaſion) prove " nothing."

Such a breach of candour, in one calling himſelf a Miniſter of Chriſt, who pretends to reſt his doctrines upon the Word of God, ſhould be ſufficient to arm his Readers with a caution how they entered upon his Work; leſt, relying upon what they would juſtly conceive to be the only genuine teſt of Truth, they ſhould find themſelves miſled, and that fatally, by the partial conceits of a prejudiced advocate.

Very diſtant from me be the idea of affixing to the ſacred character of the

INCARNATE GOD, the imputation of impoſture. I hope the preſumption of differing from you in opinion, will not amount to the conviction of ſuch atrocious guilt; for I will confeſs to you, that, ſo far as my underſtanding is capable of receiving inſtruction from the Word of Truth, my mind is impreſſed with a conviction that the eſtabliſhment of Moſes, as well legiſlative as ceremonial, was abrogated by the great ſacrifice of Chriſt. I derive great confidence in maintaining this principle, from the authority of St. Paul, who proves, from the argument of philoſophical neceſſity, that it muſt have been ſo, from the very nature of things.

His words on this head are altogether concluſive:

" If therefore, ſays he, perfection " were by the Levitical prieſthood (for " under *it* the people received the law) " what further need *was there* that " another prieſt ſhould riſe after the " order of Melchiſedec, and not be " called after the order of Aaron?"

" For the prieſthood being changed, " there is made of neceſſity a change of " the law," Heb. vii. 11, 12. Again farther on, St. Paul, continues to obſerve, " for there is verily a diſannull- " ing of the commandment going be- " fore, for the weakneſs and unprofi- " tableneſs thereof."

" For

" For the law made nothing perfect,
" but the bringing in of a better hope
" *did*; by the which we draw nigh un-
" to God." Ver. 18, 19.

I will not ſo far doubt the compre-henſion of the reader, as to ſuppoſe that theſe paſſages require any comment or illuſtration; language cannot deliver itſelf in more intelligible terms. They prove the truth of our premiſes, with an irreſiſtible demonſtration.

I now undertake to ſay, I have proved that the law of Moſes, was not only ſubject to variation, but that it was in many inſtances, actually ſuperſeded and aboliſhed, by a prieſt greater than Moſes, even him who was " for ever after the

" order

" order of Melchiſedec." I ſhall not be ſuſpected of arrogance, or of aſſuming any perſonal vanity, in having thus expreſſed myſelf, as I have not hazarded the opinion upon a mere *ipſe dixit* of any one. I have not maintained my principles upon the authority of any human teſtimony: but I have built my houſe upon a rock, againſt which if the rains deſcend, and the floods come, and the winds blow, it ſhall not fall, for it is founded upon a rock:—this ROCK is CHRIST himſelf.

From what I have advanced, I hope it will not be unjuſtly inferred, that I charge the word of God with an incongruity of command. No perſon is

more

more ſincerely convinced than I am, that the law was perfect to thoſe to whom it was given under every part of its reſpective diſpenſation; I only contend, that a diſcriminating line is to be drawn between the partial and temporary ſyſtem delivered to the Jews, as a peculiar people, and the fixed, eternal, and ſpecific law of God.

It cannot be matter of information to thoſe, who have read the Bible with any attention, when we remark that the hiſtory of the Old Teſtament is little elſe than a ſeries of events, ordinances, rites, ceremonies, and ſacrifices, which were ſo many prefigurations of thoſe intended to take place under the new co-

venant:

venant: that the prophecies were a farther confirmation to thoſe hopes, which were derived from the promiſes held out in the Pentateuch; and that the New Teſtament, is the hiſtory of the completion of thoſe engagements entered into by the Saviour of the world.

The death of the croſs conſtituted that great complete ſacrifice, without which the wrath of God could not have been appeaſed, and of which every antecedent ceremony, had only been the forerunner and the harbinger. It was here, that the form was abſorbed in eſſence:—it was here, the type was ſwallowed up in the antitype:—it was here, Chriſt became the corner ſtone of that edifice,

which having raiſed a foundation on the ruins of the law, towered above all the ordinances, and the righteouſneſs of the world:—it was here that comprehenſive expreſſion of St. John had its authority confirmed—"The law was "given by Moſes; *but* GRACE and "TRUTH came by JESUS CHRIST:" —it was here the "*conſummatum eſt*," took place;—it was here the fulfilment of the law was compleated; and conſequently, it was here the moral law was ſuperſeded, and the ritual law was annihilated.

From the time when our Lord deſcended upon earth, to the period in which

thoſe " ſtripes were inflicted by which " we are healed," it was a part of his employment, to confirm the divinity of his miſſion, by ſome of thoſe marvellous acts, which could alone have their origin from God.—In the midſt of theſe glorious manifeſtations of his power, by which the authenticity of his ſacred character was eſtabliſhed and confirmed, he took every opportunity to exhort his diſciples and followers to adopt thoſe rules of conduct, from time to time laid down by him, and recorded for our inſtruction in the New Teſtament; without which, it was morally impoſſible they could be enabled to apply

ply to themſelves, and to experience the all-ſufficiency of that atonement, he was about to make for the ſins of the world. Theſe rules when collected, conſtitute a ſyſtem of ethics, as much ſuperior to, and more ſpiritual than any preceding ſyſtem (comprehending even the Moſaic) as the heavens are higher than the earth.

Many of the advocates for the eternity of the Moſaic law, will moſt likely urge an argument from which they will probably expect to draw a powerful inference, viz. that ſome parts of the Jewiſh code were taken up, and incorporated with that of our Lord; we ad-

mit the propoſition: but what is to be drawn from it? ſimply this, that Chriſt having generally aboliſhed the whole of the Moſaic law, thought proper to adopt ſome detached ſpiritual parts of that law, and to make them a part of that eſtabliſhment, which it was his intention to have obſerved throughout all ages of the church: and this not *becauſe* they belonged to the law of Moſes, but that they correſponded with the nature of his own: by the ſame parity of reaſoning (in order to illuſtrate great things by ſmall) by which a conqueror having taken poſſeſſion of a kingdom acquired by the power of his arms, aboliſhes

liſhes the old ſyſtem of government; and while he is compiling a new code of laws, finds it expedient to incorporate with it ſome abſtracted parts of the former ſtatutes, not becauſe they belonged to the people before they were ſubdued, but becauſe they were congenial with the ſpirit of thoſe laws, intended to be put in execution.

In all that I have written on this ſubject, it has been my endeavour to eſtabliſh the truth of two or three propoſitions:—I ſhall here ſet them forth:

I. That the *political* law, as delivered to the Jews by Moſes their legiſlator, was *not* eternal.

II. That

II. That the ritual law, was only typical of that ſacrifice, which was to be made for the ſins of the world by JESUS CHRIST, the INCARNATE GOD.—And

III. That ſo ſoon as the ſerpent's head had been actually bruiſed by the woman's ſeed, the ritual law was done away; and the moral law of Moſes was ſuperſeded by another, of a more pure, ſpiritual, and refined nature.

I am convinced, that what I have here advanced, can receive its confirmation from an authority no leſs reſpectable than the Bible; from theſe data I ſhall deduce ſome inferences, which, if fairly

applied,

applied, muſt lead to the overthrow of your ſyſtem in favour of polygamy.—It is here, indeed, that the matter between us is brought to the teſt: you contend, that the plurality of wives having been permitted under the law of Moſes, muſt of courſe continue to be ſo under that of Chriſt. By the principle on which I am reaſoning, the practice of polygamy muſt receive its permiſſion *de novo*, under the covenant of the New Teſtament, ere it can be warranted.

It is a circumſtance very favourable to the opinion which I have endeavoured to eſtabliſh, that though there were ſe-

veral

veral examples of polygamy among the favourites of God in the Jewiſh œconomy, which had the ſanction of divine authority, there does not appear an inſtance of the ſame kind among the glorious company of the apoſtles, or among any of the bleſſed characters recorded in the hiſtory of Chriſt;—nor is there any one text in the evangelical or apoſtolic writings, which if fairly conſtrued, can be ſaid to authorize ſuch an indulgence. Let us, however, appeal to the touchſtone itſelf. I look for no other proof than what you have provided. You have happily ſupplied

me

me with the text, though we are not agreed in the comment. St. Paul's addreſſing himſelf to the Corinthians, gives the following injunction, 1 Cor. vii. 2—5.

" To avoid fornication, let every man " have his own wife, and let every wo- " man have her own huſband.

" Let the huſband render unto the " wife due benevolence, and alſo the " wife unto the huſband.

" The wife hath not power of her " own body, but the huſband; and " likewiſe alſo the huſband hath not " power of his own body, but the " wife.

" Defraud you not one the other, ex-
" cept it be with conſent for a time,
" that ye may give yourſelves to faſting
" and prayer; and come together again,
" that Satan tempt you not for your in-
" continency."

It was a property of one of the fallen Angels, to

——" make the worſe appear
" The better reaſon, to perplex and daſh
" Matureſt counſels."——

I cannot, indeed, conceive that you are actuated by ſo unworthy a principle; but it will not be exceeding the limits of candid criticiſm to ſay, that, in your hands, the ſpirit of this paſſage of St. Paul evaporates, and is deprived of all

intrinſic

intrinſic meaning. Your induſtry has been exerted to obviate its literal conſtruction, by means of critical diſquiſitions, forced alluſions, and far-fetched conceits *. In my idea, nothing can be clearer

* As the limits of this publication will not permit us to be too diffuſive in our quotations, we ſhall confine ourſelves to one extract from Mr. M.'s comment upon this paſſage of St. Paul. This will be ſufficient to ſhew what ſhifts a prejudiced author is occaſionally obliged to make uſe of, when he is determined at all hazards, to defend his hypotheſis.

" As for the concluſion againſt polygamy, " which is drawn from the word *wife*, as well as " the word *huſband* being in the *ſingular* number, " it will not hold; for the ſcriptures plainly ſhew " us, that *wife* muſt frequently be underſtood in " a diſtributive ſenſe. A remarkable paſſage of " this ſort is in 1 Tim. iii. 12. Let the *deacons* " *be the huſbands of* ONE WIFE, μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρες,

 " But

clearer than there being a mutual contract on the part of the man and woman,

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" But can any body ſuppoſe, that there was to be " but one wife amongſt them all? So in the tenth " commandment, *Thou ſhalt not covet thy neigh-* " *bour's* WIFE. This (like *ox*, *aſs*, *houſe*, *ſer-* " *vant*) muſt be taken in a *diſtributive* ſenſe, and " mean any married *woman*, or *women* whatſo- " ever. So Exod. xxi. 33. *If a man dig a pit, and* " *not cover it, and an ox or an aſs fall therein, the* " *owner of the pit ſhall make it good*, &c. Are not " pits, *and oxen, and aſſes*, to be underſtood? So " in the text, the word *Wife* means any *woman*, " or *women*, who may be married to the man."— EXCELLENT LOGICIAN!

" The word Huſband muſt be underſtood in an " *excluſive* ſenſe, becauſe the whole Bible ſhews " that a woman could have but one huſband, here " well expreſſed by the ἴδιον ἄνδρα." Mr. M. ſeeing that the text, if applied in its literal ſenſe, would militate with his doctrine, takes care to let his Reader know, that the word WIFE muſt be conſidered in a *diſtributive*, but the HUSBAND in an

man, *equally* obligatory on both. So much am I ſatisfied with the plain, eaſy, and familiar inference to be deduced from this quotation, that I would hazard the truth of my premiſes upon the conſtruction that ſhould be put on it by any man, who has been enabled to read his Bible with an underſtanding heart, without having been perplexed with the ſubtleties and refinements of human learning. It will probably afford ſome ſatiſ-

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an *excluſive* ſenſe. The Goſpel was not originally intended to be immerged in ſuch ſophiſms; it was directed to be preached to the poor, who could not be ſuppoſed to enter into the difficulties raiſed by Schoolmen.—The Scriptures, I am afraid, have ſuffered more from their friends (ſo called) than their enemies.

faction

faction to thoſe who have not had the opportunity of peruſing your Work, in being informed, that the learned Grotius, and the laborious Dr. Whitby, both inferred from the portion of Sacred Writ now brought forward, that it afforded "a plain argument againſt Polygamy." It is very much to be lamented, that prejudice ſhould have ſo uncontroulable a power over the human mind. We feel it more ſenſibly, when it is ſeen that a man, "gifted as you are," cannot eſcape its influence.

We have another authority of the ſame reſpectable character, St. Paul, in our ſupport, who, in his inſtructions relative

tive to Biſhops and Deacons, gives the following opinion concerning their qualifications: "A Biſhop muſt be blameleſs, *the huſband of one wife*," 1 Tim. iii. 2. Again, in his directions to Titus, whom to ordain Elders, he requires him to ſee "if any be blameleſs, *the huſband of one wife*," Tit. i. 6.

I remember to have read an excellent remark, in an able Writer, that when a man is determined to believe, the very abſurdity of his doctrine is ſufficient to eſtabliſh his convictions. This obſervation was never more clearly exemplified than in your comments upon theſe authorities of St. Paul. Your paraphraſe

phraſe of them is ſo curious, that I ſhall not do my Reader juſtice, if I omit laying the principal part of it before him. — After ſpeaking of the office of the Biſhops and Deacons, you proceed thus:

" As ſuch an office muſt moreover " require great attention, thoſe ſhould " be choſen, who are entangled as lit- " tle as poſſible in the *affairs of this life*, " 2 Tim. ii. 4. Therefore, though " for this reaſon *ſingle* men might in ge- " neral anſwer the purpoſe beſt, 1 Cor. " vii. 33: yet it may be expedient in " ſome inſtances, to chuſe *married* men " into the offices of *Biſhops* and *Deacons*.

" Where

" Where this is the caſe, the election
" ſhould not be made of ſuch of the
" *Chriſtians* as have more than *one wife*,
" as ſuch a ſituation muſt neceſſarily
" involve the perſon in more worldly
" care, than can be conſiſtent with a
" due attention to that care, which muſt
" *come upon them daily*, reſpecting the
" *Church*. Therefore the having more
" than *one wife*, ſhould always be conſi-
" dered as a bar to a man's election
" either to the office of a *biſhop*, or a
" *deacon*, 1 Tim. iii. 12. for though
" theſe laſt may not have ſo extenſive a
" juriſdiction, yet what with preach-
" ing the word — aſſiſting the *biſhops*

" and *elders*—viſiting the ſick—and diſ-
" tributing the *church's* alms to the
" poor—*one wife* and family is as much
" as can be at all conſidered conſiſtent
" with any tolerable diligence in the
" duties of a *deacon's* office."

If this is to be called reaſoning, I confeſs it is of that ſpecies, which I did not expect would originate in a perſon of your underſtanding. Whatever precepts were delivered by Chriſt or his apoſtles, were *equally* obligatory upon the *whole* race of mankind. If the plurality of wives was permitted to men in general, the reſtraining of the miniſtry from that indulgence, will not be very

diſtant

diſtant from implying a juſtification of that principle in the Romiſh church, which enjoins clerical celibacy. Since that important æra, when the true religion was reſcued from the tyranny and ſuperſtition of Papal Rome, it has rarely been thought that the clergy have been ſubject to greater reſtraints, under the goſpel of Chriſt, than any other order of men. To contend that the miniſters of the new diſpenſation are, *from the nature of their function*, precluded from thoſe indulgences which are permitted to the world at large, is *vox & prætereâ nihil:* it is expedient, indeed, for the honour of God, and to preſerve the holineſs of his purpoſes, that his ambaſ-

ſadors ſhould keep themſelves *unſpotted from the world*; that is to ſay, from its impurities: but from hence it does not follow, that they are exempted from the ordinary comforts of life—ſuch monaſtic principles are in truth only calculated for that ſpot where ignorance and bigotry have erected their ſtandard.

Every man, as well as the clergy, has his relative duties, and his engagements in life to diſcharge; to the execution of which, polygamy, and its conſequences, would operate as an impediment, in as great a degree as to that line of character.

But to conſider the buſineſs of this nether world in a more elevated point of view;

we

we ſhall find that *every* true diſciple of Chriſt, has a *race ſet before him*, the purſuit of which requires him to be as much diſentangled from the affairs of this life, as any avocation upon earth, let its engagements be ever ſo ſacred or important. Every perſon who is *really* and not *nominally* a chriſtian, feels he has *a ſalvation to be wrought out with fear and trembling* *. Such is the conſequence of this *one thing needful*, that ſcripture itſelf labours, as it were, at its deſcription. It has indeed painted it in a dignity and uniformity of metaphor, that is rarely equalled in any writer, antient or modern, ſacred or prophane:

* Phil. ii. 12.

it

it sets out with informing the *genuine* christian, that in *pressing toward the mark for the prize of his high calling* *, he has a *fight to be fought* †; that he is engaged in a warfare, wherein *he wrestles not* merely *against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places* ‡. That *the world, the flesh, and the devil,* are in league against him. That God knowing he is of himself unable to help himself, has *chosen him a soldier* ||, under the banner of JESUS CHRIST, who has condescended to be the *captain and leader of his salvation.* That ere he

* Phil. iii. 4. † 2 Tim. iv. 7. ‡ Eph. vi. 12. || 2 Tim. ii. 4.

can

can be cauſed to triumph, he muſt be ſenſible of his own inſufficiency; and that inſtead of relying on his own exertions, he muſt *be ſtrong in the* LORD *and in the power of* HIS *might* *: and that he may not fall a victim to the powerful confederacy that is oppoſed to him, he is not only enjoined, but is invited by the endearing calls of affection, to accept the loan, as it were, of *the* WHOLE *armour of* GOD †, without which he muſt neceſſarily be overcome, but with which he ſhall be *more than conqueror through him that loved him* ‡.

If this is not an overcharged repreſentation of the ſtate of every man,

* Eph. vi. 10. † Eph. vi. 11. ‡ Rom. viii. 37.

born

born under the covenant of grace, it will follow of neceſſity, that your ſuppoſition of St. Paul's intending to have a diſtinction obſerved between the clergy and laity, touching the ordinary purpoſes of life, muſt fall to the ground: as it is undeniably true, that every one of God's creatures has a work to go through, which if he enters upon with more than profeſſional ardour, will ſuffer him to be as little entangled in the affairs of this life, as the miniſtration of the duties of the church will the biſhops and deacons.

To have been conſiſtent with yourſelf, and to have given weight to your argument, it behoved you to have brought

forward

forward the whole of the context, and to have undertaken the proof (a laborious taſk it muſt be confeſſed) that every biſhop or deacon, under the direction of St. Paul, muſt not only have been *the huſband of one wife*, while (according to your judgment) the reſt of the world were licenſed in the indulgence of more; but that he muſt *be* more *blameleſs*, leſs addicted *to riot* or unruline ſs, than his fellow-chriſtians: more ſelf-governed,—leſs prone to anger,—leſs *given to wine*,—not ſo much *a ſtriker*,—leſs ſwayed *by filthy lucre*,—a greater *lover of hoſpitality* and *of good men*,—more *ſober*, *juſt*, *holy*, *temperate*, and more tenacious of *the faithful word as he* had *been taught*:—This, I ſay Sir,

ſhould have been proved *altogether*, before you could reaſonably and fairly have eſtabliſhed a principle on a *detached* part of it.

Taking the whole of this exhortation of the apoſtle, into one comprehenſive point of view, nothing in my idea can be more ſatisfactory, than the plain intelligent leſſon that it was intended to afford. The miniſters of Chriſt being charged with the commiſſion of publiſhing the glad tidings of the goſpel, and of enforcing the neceſſity of obedience to the commands of its author, it became expedient that they ſhould prove themſelves worthy

worthy of ſuch an embaſſy, by her purity of their manners, and the excellency of their lives: thereby (as the apoſtle expreſſes it, and through the medium of ſound doctrine,) convincing the gainſayers. Theſe, indeed, ought to be the principal traits in the characters of thoſe who are called to the miniſtry: but it is not to be underſtood, that they are expected to be more exemplary in their conduct, than the reſt of the chriſtians. Theſe are called upon to prove the ſincerity of their profeſſions, by the moſt ſteady obſervance of every principle laid down in the goſpel.—In ſhort, it equally behoves every member of

Chriſt's body, to be correſpondent with their vocation, whether in, or out of the church—ſuch was evidently the meaning of the apoſtle Paul.

So far as the doctrine of polygamy muſt ſtand or fall upon the authority of holy writ, I will here be contented to reſt the ſubject. In the firſt inſtance, proofs have been adduced, that the Moſaic law was ſuperſeded by the death of Chriſt: and of courſe, that with that abolition, the plurality of wives ceaſed to be lawful, unleſs it ſhould have received a freſh permiſſion under the new covenant. That no ſuch permiſſion was either *implied* by the practice of it,

by

by any of the ſacred perſons in the hiſtory of Chriſt and his apoſtles,—or expreſsly licenſed by any direct authority on their part is equally clear; the very contrary appears to have been the caſe.

I derived great ſatisfaction in perceiving upon the face of your work, that my ideas on this head were in uniſon with thoſe of ſuch characters as HUGO GROTIUS, DEAN DELANY, DOCTOR WHITBY, DICTIONARY CHAMBERS, and JUDGE BLACKSTONE, men who with the ſame zeal for truth with yourſelf, —the ſame purity of ſentiment,—the ſame capacity of diſcernment, and the ſame authorities before them, were clear-

ly,

ly, decisively, and "*gravely*" * of opinion, that "Polygamy is condemned "by the law of the New Testament."

It is by no means a part of my purpose to enter upon the business on any other ground, than that on which

* Mr. M. in a note, thus expresses himself: Judge Blackstone very *gravely* says, Comm. vol. I. p. 436. "Polygamy is condemned by the law of "the New Testament." A minister of Christ affecting to laugh at a man, who by posterity will be esteemed the ornament of the age and nation which he lived in, for maintaining an opinion, whose propriety since the christian æra, has ever been confirmed by all civilized persons, is such a violation of common decency, as cannot fail to raise the anger of every one, whose judgment has not been preverted by prejudice. The indignation attending such a conduct can only be heightened by reflecting on the function of the character by whom it is exhibited.

I have

I have already ventured. Scripture is the only criterion by which queſtions of this kind can be aſcertained: through the influence of that authority, my own convictions are ſatisfied.

To thoſe however who reaſon upon the principles of nature, and of general propriety, there preſents itſelf a very extenſive field for curious ſpeculation; men of leiſure, who are deeply read, have an ample opportunity of exerting their talents: and thereby, under God, may be the means of refuting a doctrine ſo dangerous to ſociety, in whoſe ſupport no ſmall portion of human ingenuity has been made uſe of.

By

By ſuch, for inſtance, it might be enquired, (I am aware with what humility) that if the plurality of wives was permitted from the beginning, how came it, that the Deity confined the firſt man Adam to one only? particularly at a period when, in the courſe of things, it may naturally be ſuppoſed, the world required greater channels of propagation. It might be matter worthy of inveſtigation to have it aſcertained, that in the union of man and woman, Chriſt having directed *the twain* to become *one fleſh*, and declared that *thoſe whom God had joined together, no man ſhould put aſunder*, by what aſſociation of ideas a man

man can be juſtified in forming a ſubſequent connection with another woman.—It might be contended, that as there is but one portion of affection in the human breaſt, a diviſion of it among a variety of objects is tantamount to the parties being put aſunder: it might be urged with ſome weight of argument, that the more highly fraught this affection is, it is the leſs capable of being diverted from the firſt ſubject. And the advocate for a plurality of wives might fairly be called upon, to prove, that from the proportion of numbers between the males and females, a natural inference

was to be deduced, favourable to his opinion *.

But after all, Sir, laying aſide the buſineſs, as matter of theological controverſy, let me be permitted to enquire of you, what could induce you to exerciſe your great abilities on ſuch a ſubject?—Admitting that you ſtamp conviction on the minds of your religious readers, to what end does it lead?—Granting

* A gentleman in holy orders has aſſured me, and from his general knowledge I can rely on his information, that if the Bills of Mortality are accurately compared for the laſt fifty years, it will be found, that, one year with another, the ratio runs about fourteen males to thirteen females; a fact, which, if admitted, proves, that, in the *nature of things*, Polygamy cannot be warranted.

Granting every thing that you have advanced, what has been proved but this — that the plurality of wives is not a duty enjoined, but an indulgence permitted: before you entered upon the ſubject, you muſt have been conſcious that the genius, the manners, the temper, and the laws of your country, were in direct oppoſition to your ſyſtem. You could not flatter yourſelf that any arguments you could make uſe of, were ſufficient to lay aſide a principle in ſociety, founded in reaſon, and confirmed by beneficial experience. The weak and the wicked will be happy to juſtify themſelves by any plauſible authority,

when they violate one of the chief bonds of ſocial comfort: hence the effects of your labours militates with thoſe of St. Paul, who enjoins *every ſoul to be ſubject to the higher powers.*

I ſhould here take my leave of you, and of the ſubject, if I had not on my hands a debt of gratitude, which I am deſirous to diſcharge. It is to thoſe ſingle gentlemen, who ſhall have done me the honour to peruſe this trifling performance. I cannot be more ſincere in my return for ſuch an obligation, than by appriſing them of, and conſequently warning them againſt, thoſe dangers and inconveniencies to which they

they ſubject themſelves, when they enter into that ſtate, which the chief of our Poets has beautifully painted as the

" ——— Sole propriety
" In Paradiſe of all things common elſe."

The tranſcribing a long note, will furniſh me with an opportunity, which cannot fail to derive additional weight, from its having made its appearance under the venerable ſanction of your reſpectable authority.

" It is to be feared that there are not a few fe-
" males, who (like other monopoliſts) take the ad-
" vantage of the poor huſband's ſituation, to uſe
" him as they pleaſe; and this for pretty much the
" ſame reaſon, why the aſs in the fable inſulted and
" kicked the poor *old lion*—becauſe it is not in their
" power to *reſent* it as they *ought*.

" The advice which king *Ahaſuerus* received
" from his wiſe men, the ſeven princes of *Media*
" and

" and *Perſia*, upon queen *Vaſhti*'s diſobedience, " would have an excellent effect could it be fol- " lowed. Many an high ſpirited *female* would " have too cogent a reaſon againſt the indulgence " of a refractory diſpoſition not to ſuppreſs it. " Her *pride*, which is now the huſband's *torment*, " would then become his *ſecurity*, at leaſt in a great " meaſure; for *pride* is a vice, which, as it tends " to *ſelf-exaltation*, maintains uniformly its own " principle—not to bear the thoughts of a *rival*. " See Eſther i. 10, &c. As things are with us, the " poor man muſt grind in *mola aſinaria* during life.

" It is certain, that nothing can be a releaſe from " the bond of marriage itſelf but *death*, or an act " of *adultery* in the wife; but that a man is at all " events bound to maintain the *external* bond, by " cohabitihg with a woman, who, inſtead of being " an *help-meet for him* (as we ſay) becomes, by the " violence and perverſeneſs of her temper and diſ- " poſition, a conſtant and increaſing torment; and " this after the moſt friendly, tender, and kind ad- " monitions, is not conſonant either to Scripture " or reaſon.

" Some will tell us, that ſuch a thing muſt be " looked upon as happening by the will of PROVI- " DENCE, as a chaſtiſement or viſitation from " heaven, and therefore muſt be ſubmitted to, and " endured.

" So

" So is ſickneſs from the hand of God; ſo are
" afflictions of all kinds, and certainly to be ſub-
" mitted to with patience and reſignation; yet to
" uſe means of recovery from ſickneſs, and of deli-
" very from trouble and affliction, are apparent du-
" ties, and why not in the other caſe ?"

How far this train of ſentiment can be reconciled with a liberal mind, I leave thoſe who poſſeſs it to determine. For my own part I am free to confeſs, that the ideas appear to me ſo uncandid, that I am ſurprized they could find for their author, a man of your education, character, and connections. It has ever been ſuppoſed that the huſband is the head; ſcripture and reaſon both concur in allowing him the ſuperiority. Your experience in the world cannot

have

have left you uninformed, that tyranny is not unfrequently the concomitant of power. I am ſorry to ſay it of my own ſex, but I am fearful that women have more urgent reaſon to complain of the men, than men have of the women. At leaſt, I believe, the ballance is pretty even between them.

I now draw to a concluſion: I have thrown together my ideas on the ſubject of polygamy: they are in truth, very crude, and indigeſted. The vain preſumption of removing your prejudices, or of giving inſtruction to the learned, was by no means the inducement of my taking up the pen. The object of my

endeavours has been ſimply to throw ſome information in the way of the plain and unlettered; and to oppoſe, as far as lies in the power of an obſcure citizen, the dangerous conſequences that may ariſe from your publication. Though, indeed, I deſpair of there being public virtue ſufficient either in our ſeminaries of piety, learning, and devotion, or on the bench of ——— to take a proper notice of the work, entitled Thelypthora; I will hope, that there are ſome individuals, whoſe inclination and ability will ſo far co-operate, as to ſtep forward to expoſe the fallacy of your reaſoning, and to render inert the effects which might otherwiſe be derived from

it; ſo that, according to the elegant metaphor of a deceaſed nobleman, the poiſon * and the antidote may go together.

The injuries which your labours will probably do to the world, ought by you to have been foreſeen. You owe much to the public. You have a great atonement to make. Martin Luther, the great Proteſtant Reformer, ſet you an illuſtrious example—it had been well if you had followed it. His dying prayer was, that every

* The mention of the word poiſon, reminds me of an anecdote not unworthy of being known.—A very faithful ſervant of God, a diligent labourer in the vineyard of Chriſt, being aſked if he had read Mr. M.'s publication, replied in the negative; being urged to give his reaſon, he made this ſhrewd, intelligent, and ſignificant reply, "Becauſe I am "unwilling to try how much arſenic my conſtitu-"tion will bear."

every ſyllable he had written might be deſtroyed, leſt (ſuch was the purity of *his* zeal) it ſhould be found his ſentiments had militated with, and thereby done diſhonour to the Word of God. If ſuch was *his* fear, even in ſo GLORIOUS A CAUSE as that wherein he was engaged, how much more would it have become you to have been actuated by ſuch ſentiments in an undertaking, which, if adopted by the world, muſt lead to the introduction of licentiouſneſs, and muſt terminate in the overthrow of every principle of ſocial comfort. The very infidel (a ſoleciſm in the hiſtory of religion) will avail himſelf of the detached parts of the Bible, with which you have

ſupplied

ſupplied him, to juſtify himſelf in meaſures, which in his conſcience he knows to be contrary to the "*moral fitneſs of* "*things*."

I here take my leave of you, with applying to myſelf part of your own words. — "Here, Reader, I have lifted "up the *hive*, and out has flown the "*ſwarm*; not a *ſwarm* of uſeful, induſ- "trious *bees*, but a ſwarm like that in "*Egypt*, which was *grievous*, and *cor-* "*rupted the land*."

I am, with due reſpect,

Reverend Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

A LAYMAN.